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## **Social-Differentiation and Self-Differentiation: The Jaina Concept of the Individual and Sociological Individualisation-Paradigms**

Peter Flügel<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

While 'individuality' is regarded as a cultural construct, this article argues that its trans-cultural investigation has hardly begun, both empirically and theoretically. Comparative work to date has been confined to euro-centric approaches. South Asian models of the individual, though amongst the earliest on record, have not been taken seriously as credible alternatives to European models, other than under the label of 'ethnoscology'. The present article seeks to redress the balance, by offering a sociological reconstruction of the classical concept of the individual in Jaina philosophy and of its social implications. It argues that previously opaque aspects of the dualistic conception of individuality of the Jainas can be freshly understood, and analysed, with the help of the sociological concepts of G. Simmel and N. Luhmann, which in turn are interpreted as variations of broader transcultural themes.

**Keywords:** Ātman, Equality, Individual, Dividual, Renunciation, Alienation, Hierarchy, Nāma-karman, Jainism, Vyakti, Self, Action, Person, Quantification, Dilthey, Dumont, Luhmann, Mannheim, Marriott, Simmel, Weber

It is believed that religion is something that has to do with an individual. But in reality it also concerns society. It may be practised individually but it leaves its effect on society (Mahaprajna 1987: 41).

Jainism has been characterised by both E. Durkheim and L. Dumont as a 'religion of the individual' in contrast to caste Hinduism which,

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rightly or wrongly, was categorised as a 'religion of the group'. The article addresses the question, what kind of individualism Jainism promotes by reviewing relevant models of types of individualisation and offering a new sociological interpretation of the Jaina concept of the individual based on an elaboration on the supposition of W. Dilthey (1889 GS IV: 559) that 'the structure of the soul contains the schema, the framework as it were, for all historical processes that emerge from the interaction of psychic entities',<sup>2</sup> and vice versa, and that these structures could be investigated by means of descriptive psychology and historical hermeneutics, based on the analysis of socially prevalent models of the soul or reatypes and the construction of idealtypes,<sup>3</sup> which highlight shared properties of symbolic expression.<sup>4</sup> Dilthey's approach was sociologically refined in the works of his immediated disciples Simmel (1890), Scheler (1924) and Mead (1934), which in turn influenced the theories of individuality and the social construction of the self of Mannheim (1925), Elias (1933) and Luhmann (1964, 1984, 1989), as well as Bourdieu (1980). Durkheim (1912/1915: 402) also broadly claimed that 'the idea formed of the soul reflects the moral state of the society'. Yet, his group-psychological approach was not offering any tools for investigating the hypothesis further.<sup>5</sup> In the field of Indian Sociology Marriott (1976: 109) argued, in the words of Dumont (1980: xxxvi),

2. 'Die Struktur des Seelenlebens enthält in sich das Schema, gleichsam das Gerüst für alle aus dem Zusammenwirken seelischer Einheiten entstehenden geschichtlichen Vorgänge' (Dilthey 1889/1921 GS IV: 559).

3. See Dilthey (1896: 295f., 312) on the significance of symbolic expressions and varieties of typological analysis. With reference to Dilthey's (GS VII: 84f.) critique of psychologism, Habermas (1986/1979: 186f.) criticises the 'romantic' thesis of a simple inside/outside distinction, which is evident in parts of Dilthey's oeuvre, by pointing to the fact that 'Erleben selber durch symbolische Zusammenhänge strukturiert ist' (experience itself is structured by symbolical connections).

4. A clear exposition of the typological method, neither Dilthey's nor Weber's, was presented by Hempel und Oppenheim 1936: 83f., etc. See also Russell (1908).

5. In contrast to positivistic theories of the social origins of self-concepts in the wake of Nietzsche (1887), Cassirer (1932/2007: 24) highlighted the philosophical origin of rational concepts of the soul at the hand, for instance, of Condillac's (1754) famous thought-experiment of the marble-statue that is incrementally vitalised by adding the senses one by one, thus apparently demonstrating that the individual soul is a composite of the ur-element of sensation. Arguably, a similar reductionist method is used in Jaina philosophy. As the state of Hobbes is composed of individual wills, and the soul of Condillac by individual sensations, so is according to the karman-reductionism of the Jainas the living body an aggregate of the subjective consequences of individual actions.

that 'what happens within one actor is by nature not much different from what happens between actors'. Dumont acknowledged that this notion 'shows a genuine structuralist viewpoint', but highlighted that 'the relation between such features [...] and the social morphology has yet to be worked out'. The article analyses evidence from the Jaina tradition to indicate ways in which types of social differentiation and types of individualisation can be related by way of a concept of the individuality of the person as a social form,<sup>6</sup> that is, in the terms of Luhmann (1991/2008: 142), an 'individually attributed limitation of possibilities of conduct'. It is argued in this article that different models of individuality both reflect and negatively determine distinct semantic and social spaces of applicability and hence in their selectivity reflect and project generalised properties of social structure.<sup>7</sup>

It is a sociological truism that 'individuality' is a cultural construct.<sup>8</sup> Yet, trans-cultural investigation of the different concepts and aspects of individuality has hardly begun, both empirically and theoretically.<sup>9</sup> Most published comparative work to date is confined to

6. Unless otherwise indicated, in the following, the concept of the (human) individual is used in a non-technical sense as the designation of a biological entity, in contrast to social constructions such as individuality and individualism. Alternatively, 'self-consciousness' could be chosen as an initial point of entry, as in the theory of Luhmann (1997).

7. See Luhmann (1991/2008: 143, 148 n. 16) on the reasons for distinguishing between 'person' (individualised) and 'role' (generalised). Note that the difference to Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* as it were unmediated reproduction of social structural properties in individual dispositions.

8. Luhmann (1997: 1016).

9. On the tendency toward amalgamation of terms such as 'human being', 'body', 'mind', 'self', 'subject', 'ego', 'I', 'me', 'individual', 'person', and their non-English language equivalents in the modern academic literature in the sociological literature, see Weber (1904-5), Lukes (1971: 45, 1973). Luhmann (1991/2008: 137) explained the terminological confusion and 'amalgamation' of the terms 'human being', 'subject', 'individual', and 'person' with the ubiquitous post-Kantian tendency, to define 'individuality' via 'self-reference', which renders older substance-philosophical conceptions obsolete. Instead, he noted, the distinction between 'I' and 'Me', respectively designating the psychic and the social identity of the individual took hold. Evidence for the aggravation of the problem in the anthropological literature, taking into account non-western concepts, can be found in a volume on *The Category of the Person* edited by Carrithers, Collins and Lukes (1986), symptomatic in the title of the key article of Mauss (1938, 1986), and in the following summary remarks of Spiro (1993: 143) (cf. p. 114): '[T]he critical term "self" is virtually never defined in these studies, and because, moreover, it is often conflated or confused with such concepts as self-representation, individual, person, personality, it is often difficult

euro-centric approaches.<sup>10</sup> South Asian models of the individual, for one, have not been taken seriously as credible alternatives, other than under the label of 'ethnosociology'.<sup>11</sup> One aim of the present article is to redress the balance, to an extent, by offering a sociological reconstruction of the principal conceptualization of individuality in Jaina philosophy and of its social implications. It argues that previously opaque aspects of the conception of individuality of the Jainas can be freshly understood, and analysed, by comparison with the sociological models of the individual of G. Simmel and N. Luhmann, which in turn are interpreted as variations of broader trans-cultural themes. The argument is presented in three parts. First, relevant ideas from the sociology of the individuality in Europe and in South Asia are discussed. Second, an analytical reconstruction of the Jaina concept of the individual is offered, and contrasted with

to apprehend the entity to which this term refers'. 'If, following Hartman (1964), we distinguish between "person" and "self" – "person" referring holistically to the psycho-sociobiological individual, 'self' to the individual's own person – then, typically, anthropologists (and comparative social psychologists) do not investigate the self or the individual's conception of his self (the self-representation), but the cultural conception of the person. They mostly arrive at this conception by investigating some set of cultural symbols of a social group, from which they infer its cultural conception of the person, although in a few instances they do so by means of various experimental tasks. Finally, most of these studies assume that cultural conceptions of the person are isomorphic with the actors' conceptions of the self, and some also assume that they are isomorphic with the actors' mental representations of their self, and with their self itself' (Spiro 1993: 117).

10. The sociology of the individual in South Asia remains deeply indebted to the European classics of Durkheim (1893, 1912); Weber (1904–1905, 1916–17, 1922); Freud (1907, 1912, 1923); Heidegger (1927) and the exegetical tradition. The widely discussed models of Weber (1916–17), Dumont (1966) and Marriott (1976) have not yet been replaced and remain of fundamental importance, despite perceptive criticism by Bèteille (1986) and others. Their focus lies, however, on selected textual paradigms and empirical case material selected primarily from the world of Brahmanism and /or of Buddhism. Typical for studies on individuality in Buddhist Studies is the replication of the doctrinal focus on de-individualisation, as reflected in the titles of works by authors such as Collins (1982) or Siderits (2003). Notable studies on individuality in Jaina Studies, such as Butzenberger (1993), focus almost entirely on philosophy and narrative literature. The Sociology of Jainism is still in its infancy, especially theoretically informed studies are extremely rare and hardly any work has been done on the relationship between models of personality structure and social structure. Exceptional is the study of Goonasekera (1986), which is strongly influenced by Freud and Weber, through mediation of Spiro (1970) and Obeyesekere (1976).

11. See Marriott's 1989 work on 'Hindu sociology', which gave a (pseudo-) emic spin to Thurnwaldt's (1931–34) original etic definition of the term 'Ethnosozologie'.

Vedic and Buddhist conceptions. Finally, the social functions of the Jaina doctrine in the South Asian context are reconsidered, and the consequences of the proposed interpretation of the Jaina concept of the individual as a social form for sociological theory discussed, not least for M. Weber's binary ideal types of 'inner-worldly-asceticism' and 'other-worldly asceticism' and L. Dumont's binary of the 'individual inside-the-world' and the 'individual outside-the-world'.

### *The Individual and its Parts*

Semantic changes of the concept of the 'individual' in modern European history are well documented and researched. In Luhmann's (1997: 1020f.) view,<sup>12</sup> the 'modern' distinction inside/outside that replaced the traditional social distinction above/below was mainly intended to produce a 'pure' notion of 'individuality of the individual', which identifies the individual at once with humanity at large, in order to conceptually 'dissolve' the concept of 'society'.<sup>13</sup> The problem was that because individuality was instantly identified with universality in this construction, the empirical specificity of the individual had lost all significance. Because it is impossible to deduce a concept of 'social order' from the metaphysical qualities of pure individuality, the only remaining options open for a theoretical construction of a 'society of subjects' or of 'inter-subjectivity' seemed to be 'paradoxical' transcendental-theoretical constructions, such as theories of social contract, shared transcendental substance, or mutual reflexion, which all abstract from the empirical consciousness of the individual (p. 1027f.).<sup>14</sup>

The central question addressed in this article is how a virtually identically framed theoretical problem is addressed by the Jaina

12. His studies on 'individuality' invariably refer to Simmel, and to Dumont, at least by implication.

13. 'Die Figur des Subjekts hatte die Funktion, die Inklusion *aller* in der Gesellschaft durch Appell an die Selbstreferenz *eines jeden* zu begründen – also weder gesellschaftstheoretisch noch empirisch. [...] Die Regulierung der Inklusion bleibt den Funktionssystemen überlassen. Die Generalformel dafür muß entsprechend abstrahiert werden. [...] "Der Mensch" ist jetzt Individuum und Menschheit zugleich' (Luhmann 1997: 1025).

14. 'Man muß jetzt erklären, wie soziale Ordnung trotz der individuellen Subjektivität der Menschen möglich ist – sei es durch einen Gesellschaftsvertrag, sei es durch wechselseitige Reflexion, sei es durch eine allen gemeinsame "transzendente" Residualsubstanz. Aus diesen Annahmen ergibt sich aber nicht mehr eine Theorie der Gesellschaft' (Luhmann 1997: 1021).

metaphysics of the soul, which in a way similar to European natural law theories identifies not only the individual human being but all living creatures with pure consciousness, and consequently envisages the ideal society to be a collection of independent entities that are qualitatively equal and mutually reflect one another by way of self-reference. It will be argued that the way in which Jaina theory conceives of empirical sociality with the help of a dynamic model of the living being as an internally differentiated entity whose structure of dispositions reflects the results of past interactions and informs future interactions compares favourably with contemporary sociological models of the 'person' or of the 'habitus' as a (yet imperfectly modelled) structure that is said to mediate between the 'pure individual' and 'empirical society'. The comparison will demonstrate that the supposedly uniquely 'modern', 'western', originally 'greco-christian' problematic of the individual is not unique at all, but reflected in ancient philosophical traditions across the globe. This was clearly sensed by M. Weber in his pioneering comparative work on the social impact of soteriologies. Weber's thesis evidently benefitted from the sociological insights of G. Simmel,<sup>15</sup> whose prior work on the relationship between social and individual differentiation provides key ideas for the argument proposed here, that the Jaina model of the living individual being (*vyakti*), its immortal individual soul (*ātman* or *jīva*) and atomic physical parts (*nāma-karman*) produced by constitutive processes, actions, that dis-/connect soul and matter (*pudgala*),<sup>16</sup> is not merely of salvific or psychological significance, but in the main represents a social form, whose theoretical understanding from a comparative point of view is of general sociological significance. The exercise requires first of all a formal model abstract and refined enough to enable a translation of the conceptual structures of European and Indic theories of the individual without unduly imposing etic preconceptions.<sup>17</sup> It is argued

15. 'During the critical years of intellectual gestation preceding publication of his essay on the Protestant Ethic, Weber was led to some insights from Simmel's writings. In the judgment of their gifted young contemporary György Lukacs, Weber's achievement in the sociology of culture "was possible only on the foundation created by Simmel"' (Levine 1971: xlv). See also Habermas (1986/1996: 411).

16. For a detailed exposition see Glasenapp (1915) and Schubring (1935).

17. Mannheim's (1929/1988: 234ff.) kindred idea that a model of a higher convertibility and commensurability is needed to translate semantic structures generated from different standpoints is criticised by Luhmann (1980: 12f.) for its adherence to the concept of 'objective truth'.



that the Dilthey-Simmel hypothesis, positing a homology between the structure of the 'soul', that is, the psyche of the individual, and the structure of social differentiation, however mediated by semantics, is a useful starting point for the development of a model that explains the peculiar social selectivity that is built into Jaina metaphysics of the individual.

Simmel (1901) highlighted the difference between two principal concepts of the individual:<sup>18</sup> A literalist 'quantitative' concept of the individual as an 'indivisible' entity, postulated by 18th century enlightenment thinkers, and a 'qualitative' concept of the individual as a 'unique specimen' or 'dividual' promoted by thinkers of the romantic and historicist schools.<sup>19</sup> In the former, the emphasis is on identity and equality and in the latter on difference and unity. The problem was how to conceptualise the relationship between the two, one predicated on the scholastic theory of definition and Linnaean classification and the other culminating in the Darwinian theory of population development via individual variation and natural selection.<sup>20</sup> In the 19th century, the opposition between 'individual' and 'society', which had set the process of conceptual 'exclusion' of the 'individual' from 'society' in motion,<sup>21</sup> was increasingly abandoned under the impact of Hegelian, Marxist and Darwinian evolutionary models. The trend culminated in the work of Simmel (1890)<sup>22</sup> and Durkheim (1893), who indicated ways in which individualisation

18. He avoided the use of 'person', which has legal implications.

19. On *dividuality*, a term that after its Fichtean heydays (an individual can only observe itself by dividing itself into subject and object) has become fashionable again ever since it was employed by Deleuze (1990/1992: 5) to refer to duplication in electronic control systems, while Simmel (1890/1989a: 291f.) and Luhmann (1984/1995: 625/461) highlighted the connective potential of money, 'the *dividuum* par excellence, which can adapt to every in-dividuality', see lately Fuchs (2003), Raunig (2015) and in particular Ott (2015: 63), who focuses on the problem of conceptualising the internal complexity of the 'atomic' singular living being, including 'die ungedachten Verhältnisse des Ineinanders zwischen taxonomisch und diskursiv geschiedenen Größen, zwischen menschlichen Lebewesen, Mikroorganismen und gesellschaftlichen Gefügen und ihren konstitutiven Praktiken'. See also the increasing number of anthropological publications in the wake of the work of Fortes (1971), Marriott (1976) and Strathern (1988).

20. Simmel (1908: 768f.), Luhmann (2002/2006: 248).

21. Luhmann (1989: 158).

22. Levine's (1971: xiv) delimitation of three distinct periods in Simmel's work is hard to accept in toto given that, in substance, the arguments of his 1890 treatise *Über soziale Differenzierung*, influenced by 'social Darwinism', are repeated in the *Soziologie* of 1908.



and social integration can be conceived as interrelated aspects of one and the same simultaneous *process* of progressive social differentiation and individualisation driven by the economically motivated trend toward a division of labour. What remained unresolved was the question, how the gaping contradiction between the progressive functional specialisation of labour, reducing individuals to performers of single tasks, and the democratic ideals of the moral autonomy and rights of the individual as an incarnation of 'humanity' can be harmonised.<sup>23</sup> Different answers have been put forward, none of them entirely convincing, least of all Durkheim's straightforward correlation of the division of labour with an increase in 'organic' solidarity and morality.<sup>24</sup> More realistic was the analysis of Marx (1867), who diagnosed structural hiatus between formal autonomy and equality and substantive heteronomy and inequality in modern society.

Following cues of his teacher Dilthey (1889), whose descriptive psychology and historical hermeneutics effectively revived Plato's postulate that the structure of the soul and the structure of society are related, albeit only indirectly, through the mediation of institutions and systems of symbols, Simmel (1890/1989a: 284)<sup>25</sup> addressed the question how in modern capitalist society social structure and the structure of the individual is empirically linked by developing a theory of a psycho-social parallelism, so to speak, arguing that processes of social differentiation are reflected in processes of internal differentiation of the individual, not one-by-one, but structurally.<sup>26</sup>

23. Dumont (1966/1980: 11) pointed out that 'this individualistic tendency [...] was in fact accompanied by the modern development of the social division of labour'. He contrasted the normative concept of the autonomous individual of the enlightenment with the perspective of empirical sociology: 'Opposed to the self-sufficient individual it opposes man as a social being; it considers each man no longer as a particular incarnation of abstract humanity, but as a more or less autonomous point of emergence of a particular collective humanity, of a *society*. To be real, this way of seeing things must, in the individualistic universe, take the form of an experience, almost a personal revelation, and this is why I speak of "*sociological apperception*". This the young Marx wrote, with the exaggeration of a neophyte: "it is society which thinks in me"' (5): 'this ideally autonomous man was in actual fact the most dependent of his kind, tightly enclosed in an unprecedented extension of the division of labor' (p. 237).

24. Luhmann (1977/1992: 24).

25. On Simmel's critique of Dilthey's concept of history and his own focus on selectivity and binary opposites see Levine (1971: xxii, xxxv).

26. Even Spann (1914/1923: 120) rejects the idea of a direct influence of society

Accepting the observation of Marx that there are limits to functional differentiation, threatening social solidarity altogether, he regarded it as the 'duty of culture' to arrange tasks in such a way that the demands of the social division of labour and the desires of individuals for the development of specialised capacities are matched, to an extent, by way of compatible degrees of differentiation. From a logical point of view, processes of social differential and of individual differentiation can be directly complementary only to the degree that the desires and abilities of the individual match the demands of society. Yet, this perspective does not take account of the desire of the individual to maintain or to develop a 'well-rounded personality', that is, to pursue a multitude of desires beyond specialised tasks paid for by a labour market that, more than any other social system, progressively dissects the individual into isolated, mutually unconnected functions.<sup>27</sup>

Simmel argued that in reaction to external pressures towards functional specialisation, the individual is forced to develop corresponding forms of internal differentiation through the advance of individual capacities and desires that match the multifarious demands of the social circles it is associated with or the opportunities opened up by the individual itself. In order to counteract the resulting tendency toward fragmentation and to maintain a sense of unity the individual has only one option left, that is, the rejection of the plurality of its differentiated 'one-sided' desires and functions through acts of self-reference that regenerate a sense of unity through renunciation of attachment and desire to particular contents.<sup>28</sup> In other words, according to Simmel, the tendency

on the individual, and speaks only about a semantic homology: 'eine *innere Entsprechung der geistigen Inhalte*'.

27. Cf. Young's (1958) critique of the meritocracy as a 'new' form of class-society, Luhmann's (1964/1999: 26) indication of the factual disjunction of the needs of the social system and personal needs in modern society, and Luhmann's (1984/1995: 364f./269f.) later theory of individuality as 'Anspruch' (claim, aspiration or entitlement) (a conservative topos, which is also prefigured in the work of Simmel 1913: 118f.): 'One can therefore read the situation of the claim from the semantics of merit (*Verdienst*, *mérite*). Stratified societies already manipulate this relationship. They infer the merits of higher strata from their claims, and merit can already be seen in the fact that the higher strata lead a corresponding good (noble) life'.

28. 'Dem gegenüber [the division of labour] bedeutet die Differenzierung des Individuums gerade das Aufheben der Einseitigkeit; sie löst das ineinander der Willens- und Denkfähigkeit auf und bildet jede derselben zu einer für sich bestehenden Eigenschaft aus. Gerade indem der Einzelne das Schicksal der Gattung in sich

of internal differentiation that is oriented toward the segregation of parts can only be counteracted through an opposite tendency of differentiation that is re-oriented toward the whole, that is, a hierarchical form of differentiation between the levels of part and whole, through distanciation of the whole from the parts. The irreducible tension between the two tendencies Simmel describes as one between differentiation in succession (*Differenzierung im Nacheinander*), of manifest contents and actions, and differentiation in coexistence (*Differenzierung im Nebeneinander*),<sup>29</sup> of latent sedimented dispositions and potentialities;<sup>30</sup> a distinction which he analogises by way of a conscious reduction of complexity with binaries such as 'labour and capital' and 'action and potency of the soul'.<sup>31</sup> Theoretically conflicting tendencies between external social integration through specialisation and internal personal integration through totalisation are ideally resolved through the psychological compartmentalisation of dispositions, of will, emotion and thought, while a sense of unity is retained through self-reference and distanciation from the parts, so that only certain functions, but not the individual as a whole are instrumentalised by processes of social reproduction in a functionally differentiated society.<sup>32</sup> The required mental acts of renunciation, acts of 'innerworldly asceticism' as Weber would call them, represent a reaction to systemic pressures.

wiederholt, setzt er sich in Gegensatz zu diesem selbst. *Die Mannichfaltigkeit scharf gesonderter Inhalte, die das Ganze verlangt, ist nur herstellbar, wenn der Einzelne auf eben dieselben verzichtet*' (Simmel 1890/1989a: 284, emphasis added).

29. See the semiotic distinction between 'syntagmatic' and 'paradigmatic' relationships.

30. 'Hier erzeugt das Differenzierungsstreben, indem es sich einerseits auf das Ganze, andererseits auf das Teil bezieht, einen Widerspruch, der das Gegenteil von Kraftersparnis ist. Und ganz analog sehen wir auch innerhalb des Einzelwesens die erwähnte Differenzierung vom Nacheinander in Konflikt mit dem Nebeneinander geraten. Die Einheitlichkeit des Wesens [...] wird von starken Trieben unserer Natur selbst um den Preis der Einseitigkeit verlangt und damit jene primäre Kraftersparnis erzielt, die in der einfachen Ablehnung aller Vielheit liegt; dem gegenüber steht der Trieb nach mehrfacher Bewährung, allseitiger Entfaltung, und bewirkt die sekundäre Kraftersparnis, die in der Geschmeidigkeit vielfältiger Kräfte, in der Leichtigkeit des Übergangs von einer Anforderung des Lebens zu anderen liegt' (Simmel 1890/1989a: 287).

31. Simmel (1890/1989a: 294).

32. Marx tended to critically highlight that the heart and soul of the total individual is bought on the labour market for the mere price of a particular function.

Simmel (1890/1989a: 287) pointed out that only ‘strong characters’ are ever likely to have the energy to restrain impulses that do not precisely match the demands of a given social situation or to shape situations themselves by developing additional capabilities. In his view, the logical problem boils down to the unavoidable contradiction between the simultaneous existence of multiple desires and the need of sequencing their satisfaction in time. But even ‘strong characters’ are unlikely to assemble all the capabilities within themselves that would enable them to fulfil the entirety of their desires or to totalise themselves by replicating the entire structure of social differentiation within their own personality or by intellectually grasping the whole of existence. Not even through *Bildung* can the personality structure of the individual be perfectly aligned with the (social) universe. A solution of the *Problem der allseitigen Befriedigung* must be sought elsewhere.

Effectively this requires the development of a ‘split’ personality structure, combining a stable psychological core with variable specialised functions. In the words of Simmel (1908: 757/1971: 288): ‘individuals are not just the sums of their attributes, in which event they would be as diverse as those; rather, beyond those attributes, each of them is an absolute entity by virtue of personality, freedom and immortality’.<sup>33</sup> At this point philosophical ‘worldviews’ play a significant role. According to Simmel, the experience of continuity in change is the empirical background upon which theories of self or soul were developed. The solution of the problem of the (re-)totalisation of the fragmented lives of individuals in societies dominated by an elaborated division of labour he saw in the development of cultural models motivating the distinction between features of character that remain relatively unchanged over a period of time and features that are variable. In his view, religious conceptions

33. Stern (1911/1921: 505f.) echoes Dilthey’s and Simmel’s ultimate ‘personalism’ as well, the dualistic conception of the individual as a multiplex sum of attributes and as a unitary form: ‘Allerdings: die Person ist unitas MULTIPLEX, nicht punktuelle Einfachheit; den Versuch, ihr Wesen und ihre individuelle Eigenart aus einer einzigen psychischen Kategorie heraus zu verstehen, würde ich nach wie vor für aussichtslos halten. Aber ebenso unmöglich ist es, jemals aus einem Mosaik noch so fein herausgearbeiteter Elemente allein das Bild der Persönlichkeit zu gestalten; deshalb muß man allen psychographischen Bestrebungen, wenn sie mehr als eine Ansammlung von bedeutungslosen Einzeltatsachen sein wollen, von vornherein eine Strukturauffassung, die gemeinsame Beziehung zu einem einheitlichen Zweckgebiet persönlichen Lebens und eine Sonderung nach Wesentlichkeit und Unwesentlichkeit zugrundelegen’.

of the 'soul' as a substance (in the greco-christian context) proved particularly successful in this respect.<sup>34</sup> Philosophical abstractions such as the soul/body distinction,<sup>35</sup> however, do not operate in a

34. 'As the individual becomes more incomparable, as he come more and more to occupy—in his being, his conduct, his destiny—a position that can be filled only by him and that is reserved for him alone in the organization of the whole, all the more must this whole be grasped as a unity, as a metaphysical organism in which each psyche is a vital element, exchangeable with no other, but presupposing all others and their interaction for its own life. Wherever the need exists to perceive the totality of psychic existence in the world as a unity, it will soon be satisfied by an individuation in which single beings necessarily complement and need each other, each taking the place left for it by all the others; this need for unity and hence for the apprehension of the totality of being will sooner be satisfied by that than by an equality of beings in which any one could essentially replace any other, in which each member seems actually to be superfluous and without proper relation to the whole.

Nevertheless, the idea of equality, which unifies, in quite another sense, the most extreme individualization with the most extreme expansion of the circle of associated beings, has never been more encouraged than by the Christian doctrine of the immortal and eternal soul. The soul that faces its god with reliance only upon itself in its metaphysical individuality, the only absolute value of all being, is identical to all others in what ultimately matters. For in the eternal and the absolute, there are no distinctions: men's empirical differences, confronting the eternal and transcendental, are of no consequence. *These individuals are not just the sums of their attributes, in which event they would be as diverse as those; rather, beyond those attributes, each of them is an absolute entity by virtue of personality, freedom and immortality.*

This, the sociology of Christianity, offers the greatest historical as well as metaphysical example of the asserted correlation: the psyche that is free from all bonds and free from all relations, whatever the ends for whose sake they were instituted, the psyche that is only oriented to the powers beyond that are the same for everyone—such a psyche, in conjunction with all others, constitutes a homogenous being that encompasses all sentience. Unconditionality of personality and unconditional expansion of the circle of its kind are but two expressions for the unity of this religious conviction. And insofar as this has become the metaphysics or the given meaning for life in general, it is unmistakable in the extent to which it influences, as a priori disposition and mood, the historical patterns of relation among men and the attitude with which they approach each other' (Simmel 1971: 287f., Original: Simmel 1908: 756f., emphasis added).

35. This is echoed by Luhmann (1989: 175f.), who, generally, regards soul/body distinctions, like all distinctions, as forms of 'reduction of complexity': 'Until the nineteenth century [...] the concept of the individual was still a thing concept, interpreted as the conceptual opposite to units that are complex and therefore can be dismantled. Its original etymological meaning governed the concept. Everything indivisible could be designated as an individual; the person as the indivisibility of rational substance was merely a special case. The indivisibility of the soul guaranteed its indestructibility, thus its immortality, and this explained why human beings had to answer for themselves at the Last Judgement. On this

vacuum. Their experiential basis and motivating force lies, according to Simmel (1908: 760f.), in the *feeling* of 'I-ness' which individuals with highly differentiated inner worlds operating in complex and ever changing social environments inevitably become more conscious of as a point of reference that remains relatively constant vis-à-vis the experience of change.<sup>36</sup> Simmel called this point of reference 'personal I' or 'personality' (English translation: 'ego'). He argues that in its observed function as a relatively stable point of reference for observation of contextually variable psychological content, a conscious sense of personal identity emerges only as the product of retrospective self-objectification. Hence it is to be regarded as a sign of

conceptual foundation, one could preach a religion and morality that constantly attempted to motivate human beings to act against their own interests' (Luhmann 1984/1995: 348f./257).

36. 'Beyond the significance that expansion of the circle has for the differentiation of the determinants of will, one sees its significance for the emergence of the *sensation* of a personal ego. Surely no one can fail to recognize that the style of modern life—precisely because of its mass character, its rushing diversity, its unbounded equalization of countless previously conserved idiosyncrasies—has led to unprecedented levelings of the personality form of life. But neither should one fail to recognize the counter-tendencies, much as these may be diverted and paralyzed in the joint effect that ultimately appears. Life in a wider circle and interaction with it develop, in and of themselves, more consciousness of personality than arises in a narrower circle; this is so above all because it is precisely through the *alternation* of sensations, thoughts, and activities that personality documents itself. [...]. Personality is *not* a single immediate state, not a single quality or a single destiny, unique as this last may be; rather it is something that we sense beyond these singularities, something grown into consciousness out of their experienced reality. This is so even if this retroactively generated personality, as it were, is only the sign, the *ratio cognoscendi* of a more deeply unitary individuality that lies at the determinative root of the diverse singularities, an individuality that we cannot become aware of directly, but only as the gradual experience of these multiple contents and varieties. [...] Now this alternation of the contents of the ego, which is actually what first poses the ego to consciousness as the stable pole in the play of psychic phenomena, is extraordinarily more lively within a large circle than it is for life in a smaller group. Stimulations of sensation, which are especially important for subjective ego consciousness, occur most where a highly differentiated individual stands amidst other highly differentiated individuals, and where comparisons, frictions, and specialized relations release a profusion of reactions that remain latent in a narrower undifferentiated circle, but which in the larger circle by virtue of their abundance and diversity, elicit the sensation of the ego as that which is absolutely "one's own" (Simmel 1971: 290f., Original: Simmel 1908: 760f.).



a psychologically 'deeper homogenous individuality'<sup>37</sup> that cannot be directly cognised.<sup>38</sup>

The development of the sense of a relatively stable personal 'I' is therefore for Simmel (1908: 761) a positive indirect effect of the fragmentation of the concrete individual into isolated aspects and their instrumentalisation by quantitatively enlarged social systems based on the social division of labour.<sup>39</sup> The more only isolated aspects of the individual are defined as relevant for the social division of labour, the more the individual becomes potentially self-conscious and hence cognitively disembedded from its multifunctional social ties, and the freer it is to focus its attention on its own 'individual interest' in the creation of a sense of 'individuality', or 'unity in difference', itself.<sup>40</sup> Simmel's view that fragmentation of the individual into a single stable core and multiple variable functions can have a

37. Cf. Dilthey's distinction of two types of experience, the immediate *Erlebnis* and the reflected *Erfahrung*, and the ontological conviction of the irreducible individuality of living consciousness. Durkheim (1893: 216) also subscribed to the idea of an irreducible individuality of consciousness: '[I]l y a une sphère de la vie psychique qui, quelque développé que soit le type collectif, varie d'un homme à l'autre et appartient en propre à chacun: c'est celle qui est formée des représentations, des sentiments et des tendances qui se rapportent à l'organisme et aux états de l'organisme; c'est le monde des sensations internes et externes et des mouvements qui y sont directement liés. Celle première base de toute individualité est inaliénable et ne dépend pas de l'état social'.

38. Luhmann (1984/1995: 347ff./256ff.) contrasts sociological 'individualistic reductionism' with the fact of the 'internal endlessness' of the stream of consciousness of 'psychic systems', which he defines as 'autopoietical systems', i.e., 'systems that reproduce consciousness by consciousness' (not: life): 'By "consciousness" we do not mean something that exists substantially (as language constantly suggests), but only the specific operational mode of psychic systems' (p. 355/262): '[I]ndividuality cannot be anything other than the circular closure of this self-referential reproduction' (p. 357/264).

39. 'The more purely and completely this division of labor occurs—visible in the magnitude of the group's enlargement—the more the individual is emancipated from the interactions and coalescences that it replaces, and the more he is left to his own centripetal concerns and tendencies' (Simmel 1971: 292, Original: Simmel 1908: 761f.). Cf. Luhmann's notion (1984: 346) of psychic systems as part of the 'environment' of social systems.

40. 'Thus, the differentiation of social organs does not mean that individuals are detached from their connections with the whole, but rather means that they devote only the substantively relevant parts of their personalities to those bonds. The point at which the individual momentarily touches the totality or the structure of the whole no longer pulls parts of his personality into the relationship that do not belong there. It is with social organs—the consequences and distinguishing characteristics of the growth of the group—that the involvements become dissolved wherein the individual has to



'liberating' effect for the individual clearly set him apart from Marx, and to some extent from Durkheim,<sup>41</sup> who regarded 'alienation' and 'anomie' respectively as negative states per se, in contrast to Hegel<sup>42</sup> and Husserl,<sup>43</sup> who, like Simmel, characterised self-consciousness itself as a form of 'alienation'.<sup>44</sup> Luhmann (1964) effectively imported the entire argument of Simmel and made it his own.<sup>45</sup>

convey and yield to situations and activities elements of himself that do not belong to what he wants of himself' (Simmel 1908/1971: 293, Original: Simmel 1908: 762).

41. And evidently even Luhmann (1989: 160, 170).

42. Hegel (1981 4: 385) defines the concept of alienation as the being-there of self-consciousness: 'die wahre ursprüngliche Natur des Individuums ist der Geist der Entfremdung des natürlichen Seins'.

43. Husserl (1973: 442) elaborated Hegel's idea in the following way: 'Wie aber finde ich "mich" als Menschen? Nur in der Weise, dass ich meinen Leib irgendwo draussen im Raum denke, wie wenn es ein fremder Leib wäre, und in der Weise der Einfühlung. Nur wenn ich meinen Leib sozusagen entfremde und dann doch wieder als denselben ansehe, der mir wirklich gegeben ist in der einzigartigen Weise des zentralen Dingphänomens, um das sich alle Welt als äussere gruppiert, nur dann fasse ich mich als Menschen und lege in dieser mittelbaren psychophysischen Apperzeption mein Ich als eingefühltes dem Leib ein. Ich findem ich selbst als Menschen auf dem Wegeüber eine Selbstentfremdung meines Leibes'.

44. In the words of Levine 1971: xlii-xliii: 'For Simmel, the fragmentation of social life is liberating and gratifying, whereas the fragmentation of man's experience of culture is frustrating. This is because social fragmentations promotes the conditions for developing individuality, whereas cultural fragmentation both hinders and assists man's self-deprivation'. See also Habermas (1986/1996: 411 n. 20).

45. 'Soziale Integration (von Handlungssystemen) und persönliche Integration (von Handlungssystemen) fallen stärker denn je auseinander. Damit ist nicht gesagt, daß der Mensch der sozialen Beziehung entraten und sich nur noch in der Einsamkeit aufrecht halten könne. [...] Der Mensch muß auf die Rationalisierung des sozialen Systems mit eigenen Formen der Selbstrationalisierung und Selbstabstraktion, mit Vertagung von Gefühlen und Ausdrucksbedürfnissen parieren, durch neuartige Strategien des Selbstbewußtseins und vielleicht durch eine neuartige Ethik antworten, die mit „mehrfachen Systemreferenzen“ zu rechnen lernt und kompliziertere Formen der Koordination von bewußten Systeminteressen der Personen und der Sozialsysteme benötigt' (Luhmann 1964/1999: 26). See also Chapter 25-26 on 'emotional and functional stabilisation' and 'human beings and measures', where Luhmann points to similarities between the functionalist perspective of 'indifference' as a form of freedom and eudaemonic philosophies in European antiquity (p. 381): 'Der Mensch stellt der Organisation eine eigene Art von Selbstrationalisierung entgegen. [...] (p. 389).

Habermas' (1973: 172, 176, 1986/1996: 412) verdict that by ratifying as fact the externally induced centrifugal de-centring of the 'symbolical structure' of 'I-identity' of the 'person', as much as the 'Dialectic of Enlightenment' of Horkheimer and Adorno, 'systems-functionalism has mutely sealed "the end of the individual"', 'while letting the subjects themselves diffuse into systems' is here missing

Simmel's theory of the genesis of the two identities of the individual, or rather two aspects of the individual's self-identity, a singular personal identity and multiple social-functions, represents an ingenious sociological refashioning of Fichte's (1794) theory of subjectivity, conceived as a process of differentiation, set into motion by an observer, who, in the act of self-observation, draws a distinction within herself as both subject and object. By focussing on the self as a process rather than as a substance, Fichte was able to build upon Kant's (1781) explanation of rational theories of the soul as reifications of more fundamental mechanisms. To fully express the paradoxical nature of the self-referential process, Fichte was effectively forced to distinguish not just object and as subject but in addition between the subject as object and the subject as the encompassing reflexive process which posits the distinction, and so on, *ad infinitum*. Underhand not two but three perspectives had to be invoked.<sup>46</sup> Simmel faced exactly the same dilemma in his attempt to theoretically reconstruct the genesis of I-ness out of psychological pressures produced by social differentiation. In addition to the sum of empirical attributes and the sense of 'I-ness', he posited the theoretical existence a third 'deeper homogenous individuality' which draws and observes the distinction between the former two.<sup>47</sup>

By interpreting the structure of the internally differentiated attributes of the individual as correlatives to the structure of external

the point of Luhmann's revival of Simmel's original idea (only obliquely referred to via the inclusion of Simmel [1890] in the bibliography), which amounts to a defence of 'psychic individuality'. See Raunig (2015: 205), by contrast, on the anthropological quest for antediluvian alternatives to the 'reductive' notions of 'idiosyncratic-' and 'possessive individualism'.

46. Henrich (1966: 206) points out that according to Fichte (WW III, 1797) the I for itself constitutes a 'dreistellige Relation: Etwas (1) stellt etwas (2) als etwas (3) vor.' Luhmann (1984/1995: 373/276) concludes that 'this theory leads to a kind of over-identification of the ego' and suggests the system-theoretical concepts of self-observation, self-description and self-simplifications as instruments for less abstract empirical analysis.

47. Fechner (1860 I: 4f.) tried to resolve the dilemma of self-observation by taking recourse to a quasi-Jaina form of perspectivism: 'Hiermit nun wird gleich selbstverständlich, wovon wir zuerst den Grund suchten, warum Niemand Geist und Körper, wie sie unmittelbar zusammengehören, auch unmittelbar zusammen erblicken kann. Es kann eben Niemand zugleich äusserlich und innerlich gegen dieselbe Sache stehen. [...] Darum ist die Erscheinungsweise des Geistes stets auf Einmal nur Eine, weil es nur Einen inneren Standpunkt giebt, indess jeder Körper nach der Vielfältigkeit der äusseren Standpunkte dagegen und der Verschiedenheit der darauf Stehenden vielfältig verschieden erscheint'.

social differentiation Simmel was able to translate the constitutive self-environment-relation of Diltheys descriptive psychology into a theory of the social constitution of the individual, using the processual logic of Fichte's subject philosophy implicitly as a frame. Accordingly, the 'individual' turned out to be a 'di-vidual' (even: tri-vidual), composed of (i) a universally evident psychological core, (ii) a set of historically differentiated attributes and dispositions, which in their unique combination distinguish the single individual from all others, and (iii) a reflexively constituted historical 'self' that in the process of self-distinction from its variable attributes perceives itself as a relatively stable core vis-à-vis its differentiated functions.

At the end of the new methodological postface of his treatise 'Group Expansion and the Development of Individuality', which represented in the main an extract from the earlier work 'Über sociale Differenzierung', Simmel (1908: 774f.) made it clear that he had not sought to distinguish three components of individuality, but three 'methodological 'perspectives', 'ideas', or 'aesthetical moods', under which one and the same thing can be observed:<sup>48</sup> individual, society, and humanity. The perspectives of the individual (the unique or particular) and of humanity (the typical or universal) stand both against the perspective of society in so far as both relate to the individual and allow the contingency of the social (within the individual) to come into view.<sup>49</sup> The three perspectives correspond to the subject-philosophical perspectives of subject, object, and transcendental subject.<sup>50</sup>

48. On the investigation of a phenomenon from different 'aspects' see, besides Fechner, Parsons (1951/1970: 6), who acknowledges Simmel (1937/1968: 772f).

49. 'Just as within societal development the narrower, "more socialized" group attains its counterpart (internally or historically, on a cyclical or simultaneous basis) in that it expands to the larger group and is specialized to the individual element in society – so from this ultimate point of view society as a whole appears as a special form of aggregation beyond which, subordinating their contents to other forms of observation and evaluation, there stand the ideas of humanity and of the individual' (Simmel 1908/1971: 39f., Original: Simmel 1908: 774f.).

50. 'Der Konstruktionsfehler liegt in der Gleichsetzung von Subjektivität und Allgemeinheit und in der Zurechnung dieser Gleichsetzung auf das sich selbst gebende Bewußtsein. Individualität wird nicht individuell, sondern als das Allgemeinste schlechthin gedacht, indem man auch in dieser Hinsicht Subjekt und Objekt, nämlich den Begriff des Individuellen (der selbstverständlich ein allgemeiner, alle Individuen bezeichnender Begriff ist) und die Individuen selber in eins setzt. Das macht jedoch im Prinzip jede Kommunikation überflüssig' (Luhmann 1997: 1028).

*Dividuality*

In response to the question posed by enlightenment philosophers about the nature of the relationship between individual and society, Simmel rediscovered the society within the individual, not as a reflection of the whole, as in Durkheim's (1912) theory of the soul or Spann's (1914) concept of 'part-wholes'.<sup>51</sup> But, at first, as a set of specific capacities and desires that broadly match the specific demands of the social division of labour.<sup>52</sup> Secondly, the development of a clear sense of self by way of inner detachment of the individual from its social functions. According to Luhmann (1984/1995: 373 n. 47/275 and 561 n. 46) the 'doctrine of the two identities' is only a 'theoretical artifact', since 'no individual identifies himself doubly in this way and no observer would be in a situation to keep the two identities separate'. These are only cultural attributions.<sup>53</sup>

There is no 'second I', no 'self' in the conscious system, no 'me' vis-à-vis an 'I', no additional authority that examines all linguistically formed thoughts to see whether it will accept or reject them to see whether it will anticipate. All of these are theoretical artifacts induced by an understanding of discourse (or, in parallel, reflection) as an intentional activity (Luhmann 1984/1995: 368/272).

Yet, paradigmatically formulated by Durkheim,<sup>54</sup> behaviouristically refined by Mead,<sup>55</sup> enriched by the personality-model of Freud, and

51. See Spann 1914, Koestler 1967.

52. On the different aspects of Simmel's notion of 'social differentiation', particularly the distinction between division of labour and role-differentiation, see Müller (2011).

53. The last point was already made by Durkheim (1893: 139 n. 1), and, in a different form, by Simmel (1908/1950: 201f.). See note 52.

54. 'Or, ce qui fait notre personnalité, c'est ce que chacun de nous a de propre et de caractéristique, ce qui le distingue des autres. Cette solidarité ne peut donc s'accroître qu'en raison inverse de la personnalité. Il y a dans chacune de nos consciences, avons-nous dit, deux consciences: l'une, qui nous est commune avec notre groupe tout entier, qui par conséquent n'est pas nous-même, mais la société vivant et agissant en nous; l'autre, qui ne représente au contraire que nous dans ce que nous avons de personnel et de distinct, dans ce qui fait de nous un individu.<sup>(1)</sup> [(1) Toutefois, ces deux consciences ne sont pas des régions géographiquement distinctes de nous-même, mais se pénètrent de tous côtés]' (Durkheim 1893: 138f.).

55. 'Das Individuum, das sozialisiert wird, lernt, sich selbst von sozialen Anforderungen zu unterscheiden. Es doppelt sich in I und me, in personal und social identity. Es findet sich genötigt, mit sich selbst zu kommunizieren und jene Ganzheit zu werden, die es im fragmentarischen sprunghaften Verlauf seines eigenen Vorstellungslebens zunächst gar nicht ist. Simmel und Mead steuern hier die traditi-

authoritatively summed-up in the socialisation theory of Parsons,<sup>56</sup> the theory of two identities of the individual still dominates sociology to this day, notably in the sociologies of 'embodiment' and 'the body'. This is the case, although research on the conditions of augmentation of more individuality and more solidarity, following Durkheim, was not carried out and, according to Luhmann (1984/1995: 352/260), was 'not even able to answer the questions of what an "individual" really is and how it enables itself under changing societal circumstances':

[N]ow the difference between individual and society was situated within the individual as the difference between personal and social identity. George Herbert Mead is the standard reference for this. But even independently of Mead, it was accepted that individuality cannot be viewed as purely the individual's own performance, thus not as mere self-reflection. Thereby one merely repeats the doubled paradigm of individual and society within the individual, without clarifying which problems should be addressed. It cannot remain a mere 'both-and'. The 'universal' is reconstituted as the 'social'; the world is given through others. This may be advantageous heuristically, but the question of how the I relates to the universal and how the I becomes universal are not carried a single step further by it. [...]

An exception to this predominant theoretical pattern of a socially generalized but also de-individualized personal 'identity' [i.e., one that neglects the incomparability of individuals], is Talcott Parsons's theory of general action systems. At first glance, it takes care to separate clearly personal and social systems. In their own right, that is, in regard to other functions, both are subsystems of the general action system. Had Parsons raised the question of how the universal could exist in particular individuals, he would have answered that this was simply the universal's contribution to the emergence of action. [...] (Luhmann 1984/1995: 354/260).

Crucially, the social component of the individual was not considered as a psychological fact, but as a social fact by the theoreticians of social differentiation. Parsons (1951/1970: 17f.), who used the term 'personality' instead of the term 'individuality', distinguished

onsbildenden Formulierungen bei – und blockieren damit zugleich Rückgriffe auf transzendentaltheoretische oder auf psychologische Bewußtseinsanalysen' (Luhmann 1989: 152).

56. Universalist Freudian approaches (e.g. Spiro 1965, Spratt 1966) and the approaches of the so-called cultural personality school (cf. Kardiner 1939, 1944; Kluckhohn and Mowrer 1944; Spiro 1951, 1961, 1993; Singer 1961; Shweder 1979–180; Shweder and Bourne 1984 etc.), and of Bourdieu 1983, which can be read as more limited versions of the same paradigm, do not need to be discussed here.

accordingly between a 'basic personality structure', matching the role structure of a social system, and idiosyncratic features, for which effectively the (hardly used) term 'individuality' is reserved. To bracket the two, he created the term 'total personality structure'. Important are Parsons's remarks on the mere homology<sup>57</sup> of personality structure and social structure, although he treats personality as a 'system' in itself:

Personality is the relational system of a living organism interacting with a situation. Its integrative focus is the organism-personality unit as an empirical entity. The mechanisms of the personality unit must be understood and formulated relative to the functional problems of this unit. The system of social relationships in which the actor is involved is not merely of situational significance, but is directly constitutive of the personality itself. But even where these relationships are socially structured in a uniform way for a group of individuals, it does not follow that the ways in which these uniform 'roles' are structured are constitutive of each of the different personalities in the same way. Each is integrated into a different personality system, and therefore does not in a precise sense 'mean the same thing' to any two of them. The relation of personality to a uniform role structure is one of interdependence and interpenetration but not one of 'inclusion' where the properties of the alleged personality system are constituted by the roles of which it is allegedly 'made up'.

There are, as we shall see, important homologies between the personality and the social system. But these are homologies, not a microcosm-macrocosm relationship—the distinction is fundamental. Indeed, failure to take account of these considerations has laid at the base of much of the theoretical difficulty of social psychology, especially where it has attempted to 'extrapolate' from the psychology of the individual to the motivational interpretation of mass phenomena, or conversely has postulated a 'group mind' (Parsons 1951/1970: 17-18).<sup>58</sup>

Parsons would of course not have rejected descriptions of emic concepts of microcosm-macrocosm-relation as reported in the conclusion of the influential article of Fortes (1973) on 'The Concept of the Person' amongst the Tallensi that, written in the wake of the famous

57. This is echoed by Spann (1914/1923: 120) and by Luhmann (1989: 181). Cf. Luhmann's term 'structural coupling' (2005: 274), introduced 'als Ersatzbegriff für den Begriff des Subjekts'.

58. The fact that intellectual history is relatively autonomous is commonly stressed, for instance by Carrithers (1986: 236f.) who uses the expression 'roughly compatible', to describe relations between the form of society and of the self, which, rather than offering a clear answer, may serve as starting point of a research programme.

essay of Mauss (1938) with the subtitle 'A Category of the Human Mind':

Person is perceived as a microcosm of the social order, incorporating its distinctive principles of structure and norms of value and implementing a pattern of life that finds satisfaction in its consonance with the constraints and realities (as defined by Tallensi culture) of the social and material world (Fortes 1973/1986: 286).

But sometimes, as for instance in Tambiah's (1984: 48) claim that according to Buddhism in Thailand 'from the trajectory of a single person's existence is developed the network and tangle of the cosmos both in space and time', emic perceptions are almost unnoticeably merged with etic models.

Like Simmel, Parsons (1951/1970) also argued that it would be a mistake 'to treat social structure as a part of culture or to treat "social motivation" as [...] a direct application of personality theory'. Rather, all three 'systems' are seen as epigenetic products of one and the same social process, the fundamental elements of which are 'actions' in his theoretical model:

The correct formula is different. It is that the fundamental building stones of the theory of social systems, like those of personality and culture theory, are common to all the sciences of action. [...] But the ways in which those conceptual materials are to be built into theoretical structures is not the same in the cases of the three major foci of action theory [Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology]. [...] The common foundation is not the theory of the individual as the unit society, but of action as the 'stuff' out of which both personality systems and social systems are built up' (p. 18).

The indirect link between 'personality', 'society', and 'culture' are shared patterns that are, to an extent, structurally compatible:

There is a certain element of logical symmetry in the relations of the social system to culture on the one hand and to personality on the other, but its implications must not be pressed too far. The deeper symmetry lies in the fact that both personalities and social systems are types of empirical action systems in which both motivational and cultural elements or components are combined, and are thus in a sense parallel to each other. The basis of integration of the cultural system is, as has been noted, pattern-consistency *plus* functional adequacy of motivational balance in a concrete situation. A cultural system does not 'function' except as part of a concrete action system, it just 'is' (p. 17).

[W]e know that the fundamental *common sector* of personalities and social systems consists in the value-patterns which define role-expectations. The motivational structures thus organized are units *both* of personality



as a system and of the social system in which the actor participates; they are need-dispositions of the personality and they are role-expectations of the social system. This is the key to the 'transformation formula' between the two systems of personality and social system. [...] This fundamental relationship between need-dispositions of the personality, role-expectations of the social system and internalized institutionalized value-patterns of the culture, is the fundamental nodal point of the *organization* of systems of action (Parsons 1951/1970: 540).

For Luhmann (1991/1995/2008: 141), who at first adopted, but subsequently rejected Parsons' notion of the 'personality system', and his theory of a common form of structuration based on the model of multiple systemic functions of one and the same action,<sup>59</sup> the 'person' as social form is an attribution and as such part of the social system, not of the 'human being' as perceived in everyday life, which he associates either with the 'biological system' or with the 'psychic system' somewhat analogous to the older philosophical mind-body dualisms; as much as for Kelsen (1934/2008: 63f.), who in a chapter of the first edition of his work *Pure Theory of Law* titled *The Dissolution of the Concept of the Person* showed, in an almost identical way as Simmel (1908/1957: 205ff.) in his analysis of the relationship between superordination and subordination, that the 'person', i.e., the 'physical person' and the 'juridical person', is 'merely a personified unitary expression for a bundle of legal duties and rights'.<sup>60</sup>

59. Luhmann (1964/1999: 389).

60. "'Person" [...] [ist] nur ein personifizierender Einheitsausdruck für ein Bündel von Rechtspflichten und Berechtigungen' (Kelsen 1934/2008: 63f.). Cf. D. Hume's bundle theory.

'[D]as Recht erfaßt den Menschen nicht in seiner Totalität, nicht mit allen seinen seelischen und körperlichen Funktionen. Es statuiert—als Pflicht oder Berechtigung—nur ganz bestimmte menschliche Akte. Mit anderen Worten: Der Mensch gehört der durch die Rechtsordnung konstituierten Gemeinschaft nicht zur Gänze, sondern nur mit einzelnen seiner Handlungen oder Unterlassungen an, soweit diese eben durch die Normen der Gemeinschaftsordnung geregelt werden. Nur so ist es möglich, daß ein und derselbe Mensch zugleich mehreren und voneinander verschiedenen Rechtsordnungen angehören, daß sein Verhalten durch verschiedene Rechtsordnungen geregelt werden kann. [...]

Der juristische Begriff der Person oder des Rechtssubjekts drückt nur die Einheit einer Vielheit von Normen aus, die diese Pflichten und Rechte statuieren. Die dem Einzelmenschen korrespondierende 'physische' Person ist die Personifikation, das ist der personifizierende Einheitsausdruck der das Verhalten eines Menschen regelnden Normen. Sie ist der 'Träger' all dieser Pflichten und Rechte, das heißt aber—wenn man diese den Gegenstand verdoppelnden Vorstellung ihres Substanzcharakters entkleidet—der gemeinsame Zurechnungspunkt für die als Pflichten und Rechte normierten Tatbestände menschlichen Verhaltens, der Mittelpunkt—gleich-

For Luhmann (1984/1995: 430/315), the ‘person’ as a social form is, similarly, defined as ‘bundle’ of interconnected ‘expectations’. In the same way as ‘actions’ and ‘intentions’ are designations that are causally attributed to an ‘actor’,<sup>61</sup> ‘the’ person, representing an ‘ought’, is defined as a point of reference for the individualisation of social systems through a set of specific ‘identifications’ which are employed as ontologised predicates.<sup>62</sup> The ‘different forms and

sam—jener Teilordnung, deren Normen diese Pflichten und Rechte statuieren und deren Individualisierung sich durch die Beziehung auf das Verhalten eines und desselben Menschen ergibt. [...]

Daß der Mensch juristische Persönlichkeit sei oder habe, das besagt letztlich nichts anderes, als daß gewisse seiner Handlungen und Unterlassungen in der einen oder anderen Weise den Inhalt von Rechtsnormen bilden’ (Kelsen 1934/2008: 64f.).

This, rather pointed, passage has only survived in parts in the second edition: ‘It is to be noted that a certain behaviour of this individual is the content of a legally established obligation and that by the statement that “an individual is the subject of a legal power” or “an individual has a legal power”, is only meant that, according to the legal order, legal norms are created or applied by certain acts of this individual, or that certain acts of this individual participate in the creation or application of legal norms. As mentioned before, a cognition directed toward legal norms is concerned not with individuals per se, but with their legally determined actions which form the contents of legal norms’ (Kelsen 1960/1967: 169, cf. p. 173f.).

61. Luhmann (1990: 245) regards the causal attribution of actions to persons primarily as a solution for the ‘problem of the overextension of the observer’ of social processes: ‘Die Zurechnung auf Person wählt aus, pointiert eine im Netz der Bedingungen faßbare, benennbare Stelle, wertet eine Einzelursache auf und führt auf diese Weise Kausalität in ein prinzipiell zirkuläres Geschehen ein’.

62. The image of a bundle is similarly used in Luhmann’s (1984/1995: 429/315f.) characterisation of the ‘social form’ of the ‘person’ in contrast to the social ‘role’: ‘By persons we do not mean psychic systems, not to mention human beings as such. Instead, a person is constituted for the sake of ordering behavioral expectation that can be fulfilled by her and by her alone. [...] With this [...] distinction between person and psychic system, sociology can gain access to themes that until now have been reserved for the literary tradition [...]: one copies a person as a model into a concrete, and therefore always distinctive, psychic system. [...] We can assume that such problems and their literary treatment are first actualized when society needs and differentiates personality for bundling expectational nexes. What results—as can be read in the etymology of *persona* (mask, role, legal status)—is a differentiation of person and role. Roles can, as distinguished from individual persons, then serve as abstracter perspectives for the identification of expectational nexes. To be sure, a role is tailored to what an individual human being can perform, but with respect to any individual person it is both more specific and more general. On the one hand, only a portion of a human being’s behavior is expected in the form of a role; on the other, the role is a unity that can be performed by many different human beings [...]’.

degrees of “personalisation” of social systems<sup>63</sup> can be investigated, and the cultural models or ‘types’ used.<sup>64</sup> Luhmann (1989: 175f.) shows that the abstract (quantitative) ‘individual’ is indefinable in individual terms and therefore uses the notion of the ‘person’, defined as a social form: as a set of individualising features, i.e., idiosyncratic properties, such as, which individualise the ‘individual’ by way of a string of multiple attributions: name, renown, inherited social status, rights, duties, relationships to others, social integration through mutual services etc. Luhmann (p. 178, 156f.) calls this process ‘individualisation through inclusion’,<sup>65</sup> because a unique set of dominant attributions tends to place each individual into a particular subsystem or social position. He regards this method as characteristic for hierarchical social systems, arguing, in the manner of Simmel (1890) and Elias (1933), that the ‘distinction between body and soul’ makes this external individualisation through allocation ‘bearable’ for the individual: ‘The semantics of individuality and the stratified structure of society were balanced’ through the practice of self-control.<sup>66</sup> Functionally differentiated societies do not have a single overarching structure anymore, in which the individual could find its unique place in a relatively stable manner. The individuality of the individual is rather determined by its precarious position at the intersections of overlapping social circles, as Simmel (1908) has argued. Luhmann (1998: 158-60) calls this ‘individualisation through exclusion’ and argues, again like Simmel, that, because the individual is now excluded from society and its dependencies increase, a new ‘semantics’ of ‘qualitative individual uniqueness’ asserts itself to assume a ‘compensatory function’, by permitting the individual to retreat into an inner world that is not governed by causality at all.<sup>67</sup>

Bourdieu (1979/1998: 475), by contrast, regards the learned dispositions or *habitus* of an individual as a third intermediary realm, ‘Plato’s “hybrid zone”’, between the individual’s irreducible individual features (biological and psychic) and social structure (‘structure

63. Luhmann (1984/1995: 155/108f.).

64. Cf. Dilthey (1896). Simmel (1913: 119) considers ‘ethische Typen, die das schwere Problem: wie es denn überhaupt zu einem Sollen käme – durch die Relation zwischen individuellen und Allgemeinhitsfaktoren lösen wollen’.

65. On the special case of ‘re-individualisation’ following monastic ‘de-individualisation’ see Flügel (2018a: 240ff.).

66. Luhmann (1989: 180).

67. The renewed modern interest in meditation could be related to this.

of social differentiation').<sup>68</sup> He was, in an oblique way, following Parsons (1951/1970: 229) who described those as the 'social components' of personality, produced by the residuals or memories of past life, that is, acquired habits, prejudices, tendencies, etc.<sup>69</sup> Parsons was inclined to the social personality theory of Thomas und Znaniecki (1918–20), '[T]he schema of social personality relates not to "psychology" but to the concrete individual, as a member of society, belonging to groups and in social relationships to others' (Parsons 1937: 30).

### *The Individual as a Social Form*

The crucial result of the foregoing discussion of the sociology of the individuality in Europe is that under the impact of historicism, concepts of the individual in the natural-law theories evolved into theories of individuals, of multiple selves, of entities with specific structural patterns that can be analysed on the basis of self-observations and self-descriptions in literary documents and other contemporary or historical evidence. Most famous became the personality models of Freud (1923) and the modified version of Parsons (1952/1964: 23), which were universalistic in aspiration, yet proved difficult to align with the contrasting evidence from non-European societies.<sup>70</sup> In one way or another cultural models of personality, sedimented in the literary heritage of the philosophical traditions of Asia and Europe,

68. On criticism of the 'heretical' 'doctrine of the triad' (terāsiyā-vāya) in the scriptures of the Śvetāmbara Jaina tradition, which is structurally homologous to Bourdieu's model, see Flügel (2012: 122–25).

69. Like most sociologists in the Durkheimian tradition, König (1967/1977: 242) states: 'There is therefore no independent collective consciousness, but only a personal consciousness with varied contents': '[Durkheim] war sich im Grunde zeitlebens darüber klar, daß „die Gesellschaft das Miteinander der assoziierten Individuen“ ist. Damit erweist sich, daß eigentlich gar kein Gegensatz zwischen beiden besteht, sondern daß wir in unserem Bewußtsein Vorstellungen haben, die Teils auf unser Selbst, teils auf die Gesellschaft ausgerichtet sind. Es gibt also kein unabhängiges kollektives Bewußtsein, sondern nur ein persönliches Bewußtsein mit vielfältigen Inhalten'. See note 49. According to Luhmann (1989: 162) there are no special 'enclaves' of 'social identities' within 'psychic systems' generated through socialisation, only episodic processes, 'sequence structures' oriented toward social models, which are integrated into the autopoiesis of the psychic system.

70. See the largely failed attempts to project Freud's 'universal' model of the Oedipus-conflict into societies with non-patrilineal kinship structures and other features that do not match the reductionist design of the model. See the reviews of the works on the Oedipus-conflict of Spiro, Obeyesekere, Goonasekera etc.

can be sociologically related to social structure, either as 'models for' or 'models of' or personal 'dispositions' and 'categories' or 'types' created by and for social processes. To that extent, Dilthey's research programme is still viable and incomplete. For Cartesian dualists, concepts of 'multiple' souls, 'degrees' of soulness or souls constituted of 'fine-matter', as in the works of Plato and Aristotle, still remain a great mystery. On the whole, Asian concepts of the individual have not been studied in conjunction with similar European conceptions. Comparative philosophy is still in its infancy, largely because of reasons of disciplinary self-definition and institutionalisation. With the notable exception of M. Weber, much of the work in this area was conducted in the fields of comparative religion and social- and cultural anthropology.

Yet, from the point of view of Dilthey and his disciples, Simmel and Mead in particular, the different conceptualisations of individuality can be read as social forms as much as money was a social form for Marx, and analysed in similar ways. In the remainder of this article it will be demonstrated how the dualistic conception of the individual of the Jainas, an 'empirical individual' made up of physical features and dispositions that are interpreted as consequences of its previous actions (karman), and an integral self (ātman) which at the same time transcends and rejects these differences, can be read as anticipation of much contemporary European social theory, and, indeed, goes in many respects beyond it. Rather than representing esoteric material to be remodelled by externally imposed ideal-types, a new reading of the Jaina theory of karman as a self-referential system of action will throw a fresh light on theories such as Simmel's, Bourdieu's, Luhmann's and Weber's.

### *Renunciation, Self-Differentiation, and Quantification*

Simmel's (1890) stress on the historical significance of the development of the concept of the individual self by early Christianity indicates that concepts of individuality are by no means related to a modern functionally differentiated structure of society.<sup>71</sup> In fact, semantic changes are never automatically correlated to changes in the structure of social differentiation. This was highlighted by Luhmann (1989: 181f.), who pointed to broader structural parallelism and the indirect role of the psychic system as a condition for the

71. See Luhmann (1989) and *infra*.

autopoiesis of the social system and vice versa. Rather than being the product of modernity, concepts of the self emerged in societies characterised by stratified forms of social differentiation, which they transformed in turn in their own image, a fact that was equally emphasised by Weber (1904–1905) (and Troeltsch) and by Dumont (1982/1986: 26f.), who used the Weberian term ‘other-/outworldly individualism’ as a label for conceptions of a world transcending ‘union of outworldly individuals in a community’ which he found not only in early India, but also in early Greece and in early Christianity,<sup>72</sup> contrasting the underlying idea of personal transcendence, like Weber, with the ‘inner-/inworldly individualism’ of Calvinism which inadvertently played a role in the creation of a disciplined workforce, prepared to labour for the job’s sake:

If I could draw a figure, it would represent two concentric circles, the larger one representing individualism in relation to God, and within it a smaller circle standing for acceptance of worldly necessities, duties, and allegiances: that is to say, the accommodation to a society, pagan at first and later Christian, which has not ceased to be holistic. This figure – encompassing the antithetical worldly life within the all-embracing primary reference and fundamental definition, and subordinating the normal holism of social life to outworldly individualism – can accommodate economically all major subsequent changes as formulated by Troeltsch. What will happen in history is that the paramount value will exert pressure upon the antithetical worldly element encapsuled within it. By stages worldly life will thus be contaminated by the outworldly element, until finally the heterogeneity of the world disappears entirely. Then the whole field will be unified, holism will have vanished from ideology, and life in the world will be thought of as entirely comfortable to the supreme value, the outworldly individual will have become the modern, inworldly individual. This is the historical proof of the extraordinary potency of the initial position (Dumont 1982/1985/1986: 100).<sup>73</sup>

Following Grotius, Simmel, was, next to Hegel and Nietzsche, one of the first to point out that, from a logical point of view, the division of the individual into two spheres, a unifying concept of self and a multitude of empirical functions, impulses, interests, forces, etc., can be theorised as a consequence of a technique of monocentric

72. ‘If individualism is to appear in a society of the traditional, holistic type, it will be in opposition to society and as a kind of supplement to it, that is, in the form of an outworldly individual’ (Dumont 1986: 26).

73. Cf. Dumont’s (1966/1980: 233, 419 nn. 118a, 242) earlier experiments with the model of concentric circles.



rulership by way of politico-legal dissection of the individual human being resulting in a quantification of power. Simmel's insight into the social and political consequences of the instrumentalization of specific aspects of the personality of subordinated individuals by superiors will turn out to be very valuable for the sociological analysis of the Jaina model of functional components of individuality based on a quantitative theory of *karman* or 'action'. Simmel (1908) argues that the emergence of a sense of self, 'of what each personality really is', can be explained as the consequence of, as it were, an inner emigration, by some individuals, in reaction to political subordination of the many by the one:

Rule-by-one has innumerable times been reproached for the contradiction which is supposed to lie in the purely quantitative disproportion between *the one-ness of the ruler and the many-ness of the ruled*. It has been accused of the undignified and unjust character of the ratio of what the two parties to the relationship invest in it. As a matter of fact, the resolution of this contradiction reveals a very peculiar, basic sociological constellation, which has important consequences. The point is that the structure of a society in which only one person rules while the great mass lets itself be ruled, makes normative sense only by virtue of a specific circumstance: *that the mass, the ruled element, injects only parts of all the personalities which compose it into the mutual relationship, whereas the ruler contributes all of his personality*. The ruler and the individual subject do not enter the relationship with the same *quanta of their personalities*. The 'mass' is formed through a process by which a great many individuals unite parts of their personalities specific impulses, interests, forces while *what each personality really is, remains outside this common level*. It does not enter the 'mass'; *it does not enter that which is actually ruled by the one individual*. It need not be emphasized that this new ratio which balances the full personality quantum of the ruler with the many partial quanta of the ruled gains its quantitative form only as a symbolic makeshift expression. Personality itself is completely outside any arithmetic concept. Therefore, when we speak of the 'whole' personality, of its 'unity', of a 'part' of it, we intend to convey something qualitative and intimate, something which can be experienced only through intuition. We have no direct expression for it, so that these other expressions, taken as they are from a totally different order of things, are quite inadequate but, of course, they are nonetheless indispensable. The whole rulership relation between the one and the many and evidently not only in the case of political domination is based on this decomposition of personality (Simmel (1908/1950: 201f., emphasis added).

From this vantage point, the first steps of the development of the internally differentiated modern individual are rooted not in the functional division of labour, but in despotic rule. Simmel's main



argument is, interestingly enough, that the more internally differentiated the individual is, the easier its desire for personal freedom can be accommodated to authoritarian rule. Outworldly individualism is thus a technique of rule that enables the division of spoils between ruler and ruled to the benefit of both, without threatening the transformation of the asymmetrical relationship itself. Inworldy individualism by contrast is the individualism of the ruler itself who brings his 'whole personality' into the relationship without being forced to develop an inner world or to sacrifice any parts, that is, functions, to be able to continue to exist vis-à-vis the subordinated social mass:

It is one of the highest tasks of political art of church politics, family politics, politics in general to learn to recognize and, as it were, chemically prepare, those sides of man with which he forms the more or less leveled 'mass' and above which the ruler can tower at a height that is alike for all members of the mass. These he needs to distinguish from those other sides that must be left to the freedom of the individual although it is only the conjunction of both which make up the whole personality of the subject. Groups are characteristically different according to the proportion between the members' total personalities and those parts of their personalities with which they fuse in the 'mass'. The measure of their governability depends on this difference in quanta. *More precisely, a group can be dominated by one individual the more easily and radically, the smaller the portion of the total personality that the member contributes to that mass which is the object of subordination.* Where, on the other hand, the social unit covers so much of the component personalities; where they are so closely interwoven with the group as was true of the inhabitants of the Greek city states or of the burghers of medieval cities, government-by-one becomes something contradictory and impracticable. But this essentially simple, basic relationship is complicated by two factors. One is the magnitude or smallness of the subordinate group, and the other is the differentiation of the individual personality. Other things being equal, the larger the group, the smaller is the range of ideas and interests, sentiments and other characteristics in which its members coincide and form a 'mass'. Therefore, insofar as the domination of the members extends to their common features, the individual member bears it the more easily, the larger his group. Thus, in this respect, the essential nature of one-man rule is shown very clearly: the more there are of those over whom the one rules, the slighter is that portion of every individual which he dominates. *But secondly, it is extremely important whether the individuals have, or do not have, a psychological structure sufficiently differentiated to separate, in their practice and in their feelings, the elements which lie within and without the sphere [204] of domination.* This differentiation must coincide with the art of the ruler, noted earlier, with which he himself distinguishes those elements within each of his sub-

ordinates that are accessible to domination from those which are not. It is only when the two coincide that the contradiction between domination and freedom, the disproportionate preponderance of the one over the many, is resolved at least approximately. If this is the case, individuality can freely develop even in despotically ruled groups. The formation of modern individuality began, in fact, in the despotisms of the Italian Renaissance. Here as in other cases, for instance, under Napoleon I, the ruler was interested in granting the greatest freedom to all those sides of the personality in regard to which the individual does not belong to the 'mass', which are, that is, removed from the area of political domination (Simmel 1908/1950: 203f., emphasis added).

The functionalist theories of Parsons (1951) and of Luhmann (1964/1999: 24f.) take Simmel's critical insight already for granted as the description of the universal nature of all things social,<sup>74</sup> effectively extending it from the analysis of the mechanisms of social subordination to all social systems, which, in Luhmann's words, by no means include all actions of the participating persons: 'Social systems do not consist of concrete persons with body and soul, but of concrete actions.' Any individual generally participates in many overlapping social systems with one or other or one and the same action or aspect of its personality. It is the peculiar selectivity of functions or attributes that distinguish one social system from another.<sup>75</sup>

The philosophical logic of Simmel's model and of Luhmann's system-theoretical reformulation is appealing, because both address the question of individualisation on a level of abstraction that is compatible with religious philosophy and permits new insights

74. Cf. Habermas (1986/1996: 412): 'Luhmann could then already postulate as trivial the fact that personal and societal systems build environments for each other'.

75. 'Als Handlungssysteme gesehen, schließen soziale Systeme keineswegs alle Handlungen der beteiligten Personen ein. Sozialsysteme bestehen nicht aus konkreten Personen mit Leib und Seele, sondern aus konkreten Handlungen. Personen sind – sozialwissenschaftlich gesehen – Aktionssysteme eigener Art, die durch einzelne Handlungen in verschiedene Sozialsysteme hineingeflochten sind, als System jedoch außerhalb des jeweiligen Sozialsystems stehen. In einzelnen Handlungen kommen Sozialsystem und Personalsystem zur Deckung, als Systeme stehen sie einander gegenüber, bilden selbstständige Ordnungsschwerpunkte mit eigener Bestandsproblematik und halten sich gegeneinander relativ invariant' (Luhmann 1964/1999: 24). Luhmann later rejected Parsons' idea that persons are 'systems', and insisted that the 'form of the person' is merely a type of attribution of limitations of possibilities of conduct to the individual (Luhmann 1991/1995/2008: 142): 'By persons we do not mean psychic systems, not to mention human beings as such. Instead, a person is constituted for the sake of ordering behavioural expectations that can be fulfilled by her and her alone' (Luhmann 1984/1995: 315). He also switched from a theory action to a theory of communication.

into aspects of the social implications of ancient Indian thought that have not yet been considered and vice versa. The investigation of the social implications and historical consequences of explanatory models such as Simmel's or Luhmann's and/or of Jaina philosophers is a different question altogether. Simmel's model explains, logically, how 'the individual', first inferiors, then also superiors, can be thought of as getting progressively 'excluded' from society, or rather excluding itself, in the pursuit of freedom. While superiors are instrumentalised by society with the whole of their being within the material world, inferiors retain spheres of mental freedom by way of selective integration, compartmentalisation and development of an awareness of an inner self outside the material world. But has the philosophy of the self really emerged amongst subaltern elites? The superior herself, being totally instrumentalised by the group, may have even more reason to develop an inner world to escape to or renounce the world of householder-life entirely.

*Sociology of Philosophy East and West*<sup>76</sup>

The main result of the brief review of contemporary sociological theories of the individual in Europe is that the quantitative notion of the human individual as a numerically separate entity, ontologically constituted by the relationship between a self and a body of homogenous metaphysical quality, was in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries replaced by conceptions that took account of the historical uniqueness of individual qualities by replacing the substance dualism of the rational theories of the soul<sup>77</sup> by a hierarchical dualism between a unitary individual and its multiple qualities or parts. The principal argument of this article is that the Jaina model of the concrete individual (*vyakti*), conceived as dynamic entity, composed of a single soul-substance (*ātman* or *jīva*) and multiple mind and body constituting factors, which are interpreted as the atomic material fruits of

76. Cf. Collins (1989) for a, different, 'interactional chain' or 'lineage' oriented approach to the sociology of philosophy.

77. Soul and body are variations of the idea of an individual as a 'thing'. See n. 53. Luhmann (1991/2008: 141) argues that the essentially collectivistic legal concept of the 'person' was adopted by 17th century jurists in Europe to create conceptual distance to the theologically coloured body/soul-dualism of the traditional estates-based-society. Mauss (1938, 1986: 22) presented a different historical sequence, critically discussed and supplemented by Carrithers (1986: 235ff.), who focusses attention on the different histories of 'mental and physical individuality'.

past actions (*karman-pudgala*) of the embodied soul, is structurally homologous to Simmel's qualitative model of the individual, which will be labelled the model of the 'hierarchical individual' for reasons that will become apparent in Part Two of this article. In case the observation of a structural parallelism proves to be viable, many avenues for conceptual translation and comparative analysis will open up. Weber (1920-21) and Jaspers (1949) have already noted that in human evolution during the 'axial age' universal models of 'transcendence', of 'inner worlds' and of 'individuality' were systematised independently in various parts of the world where early states developed. Clearly, human beings confronted with similar structural problems and responded with structurally similar solutions, most details of which are yet to be worked out.

While numerous increasingly sophisticated studies of technical aspects of Indian philosophy and features of Indian culture now exist, comparative sociology of philosophy and culture is still at a stage of speculative exploration as far as broader patterns of semantic evolution of the concepts of individuality are concerned. The significance of Indian philosophy for the comparative history and sociology of the concept of the individual was already highlighted by adepts of the Durkheim school, such as Mauss (1938, 1986: 13), who noted that 'India appears to me indeed to have been the most ancient of civilisations aware of the notion of the individual, of his consciousness – may I say of the "self" (*moi*). *Ahamkāra*, the creation of "I" (*je*), is the name of the individual consciousness; *aham* equals "I" (*je*). It is the same Indo-European word as "ego". The word *ahamkāra* is clearly a technical word, invented by some school of wise seers, risen above all psychological illusions [...] esteeming that the "self" (*moi*) is the illusory thing'. Carrithers (1986: 237) ventures further, maybe too boldly, in drawing far-reaching conclusions from the single fact that in the form of Schopenhauer's recasting of Buddhist and Vedānta philosophy 'a conception of *moi* current in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Germany is essentially similar to views of the *moi* held in India in the fifth century BCE [...], [which] have been faithfully and easily translated into a modern European idiom'. This prompts Carrithers (1986: 245, 255) to amalgamate all ancient Indian philosophies of (non-)self that emerged in the mid first millennium BCE in the context of 'the rapid expansion of monarchical states and of cosmopolitan culture with an increasingly complex division of labour' (p. 253f.) and all modern European theories of the self and the person, to be able to make the general claim that '[t]hese sorts of

complex society make available such rich and disparate experiences to their members that both *moi* and *personne* theories can flourish in them', the more so, if *moi* and *personne* theories are in direct competition with one another, as in the case of Schopenhauer and Hegel.

The contributions of Mauss and Carrithers expanded in a heuristic manner the scope of Durkheim's theory of social differentiation to ancient Indian materials and thereby helped building bridges between sociology and comparative philosophy. Prior to Mauss, M. Weber had attempted this already, on an ambitious scale, albeit with a slightly different thematic focus.<sup>78</sup> Weber (1904–5) touched upon the question of individuation, but did not explore the 'heterogeneity of meanings' in greater detail.<sup>79</sup> Possibly, he regarded this field of exploration as Simmel's domain. How exactly the social implications of different notions of self and individual (which may be evident in one and the same (type of) society), can be fruitfully investigated and theorised remains an open question to this day. Only Simmel (1908), Dumont (1966, 1986) and Luhmann (1989) have seriously addressed the issue in general theoretical terms,<sup>80</sup> based on the strategy of comparing generalised patterns of social differentiation and general patterns of individual differentiation, to avoid the culturalist fallacies of socialisation theory altogether.<sup>81</sup> Because of the structural homologies of Simmel's model of the relationship of quantitative and qualitative concepts of the individual and the Jaina concept of the individual, his original insights may prove to be useful in this context, in the same way as the Jaina concepts themselves. But Simmel's ideas are yet to be scrutinised in the light of the Indic evidence. The key question is, in which way models of the individual as such, whether philosophical or sociological, can function as social forms. A related question concerns the way in which such models change or are replaced. The fact that the Jaina model of the individual retained its significance in a virtually unchanged

78. In the field of comparative philosophy Deussen (1894, 1917) had already published a work pioneering, followed by similar studies of more limited scope by Jacobi (1923), Glasenapp (1954), etc. The interest in comparative philosophy is only in recent years increasing beyond small circles of specialists.

79. Weber, cited by Lukes (1971: 44).

80. In a new footnote to the second edition of his work Durkheim (1893: chap. 1 n. 12) describes Simmel's (1890) work as not specifically focussed on the social division of labour, but rather on the question of individuation: 'il n'est pas question de la division du travail spécialement, mais du processus d'individuation, d'une manière générale'.

81. Cf. the output of associates of the so-called culture and personality school.

form over hundreds of years points to the necessity of taking a long view. Short term social changes evidently do not affect fundamental features religious models of self and individual nor their acceptability. Why this is the case needs to be explained.

In order to theorise the formal links between social structure, cultural models of self and person and psychological structure, Simmel needed more than the model of the differentiation of the self, reflecting the structure of the social division of labour. Firstly, the relationship between the general concept of the individual and empirical individuality needed to be clarified. Secondly, the differences between distinct concepts of individuality and their functions had to be investigated. With the exception of a short article, 'The Metaphysics of Death', Simmel (1910) did not address the second question in any systematic way. In his late article 'The Individual Law' Simmel (1913: 150) made, however, interesting, now almost, but not entirely, forgotten,<sup>82</sup> proposals as to how the Kantian conundrum of the indifference of the universal law (the categorical imperative) towards the empirical individual can be solved through an individualised form of ethics that derives its 'ought' not from an abstract value-ideal, but from the objective qualities of the individual itself, that is, from an existential moral compass, 'a third' sphere or 'individual law', that is the product and impetus of the process of life itself. As a consequence of this perspective, every singular moment appears to be both unique as well as regulated in its ethical aspects. Because even the universal becomes something singular, an enormous weight is put on the shoulders of the individual which as the sole master of its own fate has to find the right path for itself at any given moment: 'The responsibility for our entire history lies in the emerging duty [Gesolltwerden] of every single action' (Simmel 1913: 159).<sup>83</sup> Because the process of individual life involves

82. But see Podoksik (2011) and the special issue of *Theory, Culture & Society* 2012: Georg Simmel's 'Sociological Metaphysics': Money, Sociality, and Precarious Life, edited by Austin Harrington and Thomas M. Kemple.

83. Dilthey and Bergson evidently influenced Simmel's idea, which in turn is reflected in Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*: 'Das Entscheidende ist aber, daß das individuelle Leben nichts Subjektives ist, sondern, ohne irgendwie seine Beschränkung auf dies Individuum zu verlieren, als ethisches Sollen schlechthin objektiv ist. Die falsche Verwachsung zwischen Individualität und Subjektivität muß genau so gelöst werden, wie die zwischen Allgemeinheit und Gesetzmäßigkeit. Dadurch werden die Begriffe frei, die neue Synthese zwischen Individualität und Gesetzmäßigkeit zu bilden. Die sozusagen technische Schwierigkeit, dieses sich in der idealen Sphäre des Lebens vollziehende objektive Sollen auch als solches zu erkennen, wird niemand



the totality of the life-course of the individual human being as a unique form of existence, not merely the inalienable 'lonely' core of the 'deepest stratum of personality' or the 'intermediary strata of personality', whose (alienable) sectors partly overlap with those of other individuals (154f.),<sup>84</sup> the relationship between the historically overdetermined individual (the 'soul') as whole and the 'singular' act needs to be theorised. Simmel argues that the individual as living processual entity is constituted simultaneously by centripetal and centrifugal forces connecting the form-giving self-referential centre of the individualising entity with the all-encompassing 'flow' of life of which it is but a part:

Yet, the organic individual, striving to its centre with the same relationship that encloses its entire periphery, is at the same moment a part, a transit point, of a nexus that encompasses it. One can call this duality of inward and outward orientation, to the individual living form and to the trans-individual totality of life, the typical tragedy of the organism (Simmel 1913: 142).

He criticises the rational morality of Kant for 'the extraction and isolation' of the individual action as such, without regard of the 'richness of the empirical personality' of the particular agent that has

leugnen. Aber keine geringere droht, wenn man das Sollen unmittelbar aus dem Bestande extra-individueller Werte herleitet, die ihrerseits ganz ebenso der Deduktion bedürfen, oder wenn man sie kurzerhand damit abschneidet, daß das subjektive Gewissen nicht irre' (Simmel 1913: 152).

84. 'Das Individuum ist der ganze Mensch, nicht der Rest, der bleibt, wenn man von diesem das mit andern Geteilte abzieht. Freilich ist in einem gewissen Sinn die qualitative Einzigkeit nicht abzuweisen und zwar gerade, weil wir festhalten, daß jedes einzelne Sollen die ganze Persönlichkeit repräsentiert und ein Gesamtleben, mag es noch so viel mit anderen gemein haben, doch eigentlich eine doppelte Unvergleichbarkeit an sich fühlt. Einmal in einer *tieftsten Persönlichkeitsschicht*, von der ein jeder, unbeweisbar, aber unwiderleglich empfindet, daß er sie mit niemandem teilen und niemandem mitteilen kann, die qualitative Einsamkeit des persönlichen Lebens, deren Brückenlosigkeit in dem Maße der Selbstbesinnung fühlbar wird. Und neben dieser sozusagen punktuellen, in das schlechthin Nicht-Extensive des Lebens zurückgezogenen Individualität gerade die des *Gesamtumfanges unsrer Existenz*: in vielen Einzelabschnitten dieser mögen Individuen übereinstimmen – die Totalität eines Lebenslaufes, mit wirklich allen äußeren und inneren Bestimmungen und Ereignissen, wiederholt sich sicher nicht ein zweites Mal. Die Bezirke der Vergleichbarkeit, deren Inhalte überhaupt allgemeinen Gesetzen der Wirklichkeit wie der Forderung Raum geben können, liegen gewissermaßen in den *mittleren Schichten der Persönlichkeit*; sowohl ihr Innerlich-Zentralstes, wie ihr Phänomenal-Totales hat das Cachet des Unvergleichbaren, des nur einmal Seienden' (Simmel 1913: 154f., emphasis added).



performed it, leading to the construction of a pure transcendent I as its correlate (141). The categorical imperative severs the act from the agent as 'free-flowing content' to be able to judge it objectively as right or wrong (123):

The standpoint criticised here entangles itself with a nodal point of rationalism as such. [...]: that the predicates of possible subjects can be detached from them and presented as independent-logical contents. Between any two of those predicates one states a contradiction, an excluding of oneself—and believes then, that a subject, participating in the one, cannot possess the other one, or according to the rule of the excluded third, must possess one of them. [...] As soon as each of the two sides has a positive meaning, it cannot quite be decided on the basis of their logical relation, whether they exclude or reconcile themselves with reference to a (logical) subject—but only on the basis of the concrete knowledge of the subject. Certainly, mortal and immortal are opposites; however the exclusion of the one still does not make the other valid (122f.).<sup>85</sup>

Simmel never referenced his sources, and hence was considered by his opponents to be a mere feuilletonist. However, he described the 'normative' relationship between the individual and its components<sup>86</sup> in terms which betray their inspiration from modern logic, that is the mereological aspects of theories of number by Frege (1884), Husserl (1887), and Bergson (1889). The exact mix of ideas that Simmel adopted is yet to be identified. His idea that an exhaustive list

85. Luhmann (1989: 155f.) regards 'the lack of the distinction of rules and actions' as the sign of an 'unsophisticated (einfache) society'. Yet many sophisticated examples of the Jaina syādvāda method of conditional predication could be cited as historical examples to strengthen Simmel's case. Suffice it to mention Mahāvīra's reported dialogue with Jamāli in Viy. 9.33.2e (485b) on the question 'whether the world and the soul are eternal or not'. The 'correct answer' given is: 'both world and soul are eternal in so far as they never were not, never are not and never will not be, but that they are not eternal in so far as, in the case of the world, *osappiṇīs* and *ussappiṇīs* [regressive- and progressive half-cycles of the current time-cycle], and in the case of the soul, the different stages of existence succeed each other'.

86. 'Whatever we take as a point, or refuse to take as further subdivided into parts, that we regard as one; but every one of outer intuition, whether empirical or pure, can also be regarded as a many. Every idea is one when isolated in contrast with another; but in itself it can again be distinguished into a many' (Baumann, in Frege 1884/1974: 41). Cf. Bergson (1889/1910: 75f.): 'Number may be defined in general as a collection of units, or, speaking more exactly, as the synthesis of the one and the many. Every number is one, since it is brought before the mind by a simple intuition and is given a name; but the unity which attaches to it is that of a sum, it covers a multiplicity of parts which can be considered separately'.

of the attributes of a concrete individual can never be created seem to have its roots in the theory of Frege (1884/1974: 39ff., 1892/1986: 27f./41f.), later adopted by Russell (1918/2010: 28f.) in his work on logical atomism,<sup>87</sup> that names, colloquially called ‘proper names’, for individuals such as Socrates, are from a logical point of view ‘abbreviations for descriptions’ of ‘complicated systems of classes or series’, that is, propositions asserting the unity of complex entities, which cannot be described exhaustively, in contrast to names ‘in the proper strict logical sense of the word’ which, according to Russell, are designations that ‘stand for an actual object’. Like Frege (1884/1974: 39ff.),<sup>88</sup> Simmel (1913: 118f.) asked the question how a general term relates to the individual factors constituting a concrete individual being, factors that can never be described exhaustively.<sup>89</sup> He comes to the conclusion that the relationship can only be aspirational. In his view, the connection must be a normative, functional

87. On Fechner’s influence on Simmel’s early logical atomistic world-view, see Böhringer (1976) and Podoksik (2010: 127): ‘It perceived the world as composed of small distinct particles, yet the distinctness of these particles did not imply their qualitative uniqueness. The qualitative differentiation of phenomena was produced instead by an endless variety of interactions between the particles’. On the history of philosophical and physical atomism, see Stöckler (2012), who, in line with European philosophy in general, overlooked the atomism of Jaina philosophy, influenced by Vaiśeṣika philosophy.

88. Frege’s (1884/1974: 66f./66f.) brief answer to the particular conundrum of the relationship between the entity ‘moons of jupiter’ and its four parts offered (as in Jaina philosophy) a form of perspectivism: ‘Only a concept which isolates what falls under it in a definite manner, and which does not permit any arbitrary division of it into parts, can be a unit relative to a finite number. [...] We can now easily solve the problem of reconciling the identity of units with their distinguishability. The word “unit” is being used here in a double sense. The units are identical if the word has the meaning just explained. In the proposition “Jupiter has four moons”, the unit is “moon of Jupiter”. Under this concept falls moon I, and likewise also moon II, and moon III too, and finally moon IV. Thus we can say: the unit to which I relates is identical with the unit to which II relates, and so on. This gives us our identity. But when we assert the distinguishability of units, we mean that the things numbered are distinguishable.’

89. For the ca. 5th century CE Jaina philosopher Āryarākṣita (CE 216.1-2), the most important binary (du-nāma) is the distinction between ‘genus’ (visesa) and ‘species’ (avisesa), which implies a further distinction between ‘one’ and ‘many’, as the great number of examples, illustrating the method of taxonomic classification, demonstrate. Rather than names of individual living or non-living entities, here names for types of life and of non-life are distinguished. See Flügel (2018a: 204f.). In his study of ‘The Notion of the Person’, Mauss (1938, 1986: 4-12) also first investigates different naming systems.

relationship between an ought and an is, from whichever of the two vantage points one looks at the relationship between the universal and the individual. The challenge is to conceptualise the form of a concrete entity which has to meet a twofold condition: to be an individual and at the same time to be subordinate to a universal:<sup>90</sup>

The content of the general term, which designates a concrete thing, encompasses only certain parts, aspects, determinations of the thing, but many others, the entire individual configuration, all that pertaining to the thing, which comes either under another term or cannot be expressed conceptually at all, the term leaves entirely outside of its content. Now there is however the peculiarity, that this term nevertheless stand for the totality of the thing, for its unity, including all determinations that are not affected by the term too. This can only be thought of in this way, that the term is as it were a skeleton, an inner schemata, which accretes those individual parts or qualifications, an inner form, which holds together all elements within the circumference of the thing. The term is not only the logical minimum of the thing, of those properties which the thing must show at the minimum, to be assigned a particular meaning; but it has that functional meaning, to impose a form also on all remaining, or more precisely: on the totality of all the real elements of the being—a form through which many diverse pieces of existence (*Daseinsstücke*) can circulate (Simmel 1913: 118f.).

The ideas of Dilthey, Simmel and authors such as Luhmann who they inspired seem particularly useful for the comparative investigation of Indian models of the individual, not least the Jaina theory of *karman*, based on the image of karmic particles, objectified fruits of action, flowing into the soul and forming the physical individual body to the degree of the active engagement with the world, i.e., the violence committed in acts of mind, speech and body. Before the discussion of the sociology of the individual in South Asia, and the detailed analysis of South Asian concepts of the individual in detail, however, Mannheim's (1925: 115ff., 182) objection to the 'romantic-conservative' and 'counter-revolutionary' nature of the qualitative

90. 'Allenthalben also, wo eine konkrete Einheit das Allgemeine zu einem konkreten Individuum ist, wo dieses von jener überragt, umschlossen, genährt ist und dabei doch noch einen spezifischen Charakter, eine Fähigkeit zur Spontaneität und einem relativen Ganz-Sein besitzt—da drückt das Sollen gleichsam die Spannung zwischen diesen beiden Seinsfaktoren aus; ob dies oder jenes gesollt wird, ist damit noch nicht festgelegt, sondern nur die Beschaffenheit und Lage eines Wesens, das unter der Doppelbedingung steht: ein Individuum zu sein und zugleich einem Allgemeinen zu unterstehen; einer solchen individuellen Existenz ist es immanent, daß ein Gesetz (welchen Inhaltes auch immer) für sie besteht' (Simmel 1913: 119f.).

concept of individual freedom needs to be mentioned. In his view, the model deliberately 'attacks' the principle of political equality which is characteristic for the 'liberal' 'revolutionary concept of freedom'. Although he personally had great respect for Simmel,<sup>91</sup> who was one of his teachers, he focused on his theory of the 'individual law' as one of the prime examples of conservative thought which he associated also with the effectively politically 'indifferent' 'anti-Kantian' intellectual movements of historism, phenomenology and the philosophy of life. Mannheim's perceptive analysis of the social implications of the quantitative model of the individual and of the qualitative model of the individual exemplify ways in which models of the individual person can function as blueprints for different forms of social action. Whereas the 'liberal thinker' does not care about the inner life, and is solely committed to the ideal of the principal equality of all human beings and defines the limit of his own freedom in terms of the freedom of his fellow citizens alone, the 'romantic thinker' posits a limit already in the 'individual law' in which the individual finds the condition of personal possibilities and constraints. Mannheim sees the origins of the qualitative notion of the individual in the different freedoms of the estates-based society of the ancient régime:

This freedom that is inherent in the nature of individuality is however typically romantic and in dangerously close proximity to anarchic subjectivism. Even if the interiorisation of the problem is a conservative achievement (interiorisation of aspirations takes away the worldly-revolutionising sting) and thereby as it were an external political anarchy is turned into an anarchy of inwardness (liberal thought does not care about inwardness and takes it as a 'private' sphere, and therefore poses the problem of 'freedom' always only on the level of public life), there is also the danger therein, that this interiorised anarchy becomes a danger to the state (Mannheim 1925/1984: 116).

The case in point for him is the strategy of the Stoa in antiquity, which can be usefully compared with the Jaina tradition. According to Mannheim (128), the tension between the universal and the concrete individual reached the maximal tension in this philosophical tradition. The fact that no 'revolutionary conclusions' were drawn, rested on the fact that the philosophy was perpetuated by a social elite, which was content with the cultivation of inner individual freedom while leaving the hierarchical social structure intact: 'all of

91. See Mannheim (1918/2012), where also European and Indian notions of the self are contrasted along Weberian lines.

what exists [...] was conceived as a compromise between the absolute norm and relative circumstances' (129).<sup>92</sup> A similar approach to the relationship between precept and practice was chosen by the majority of the Jaina traditions. Yet, the political affiliations of the Jaina householders vary within a certain range of parameters. Revolutionary action is indeed something that would put great strain on an adherent of the Jaina teachings.<sup>93</sup>

*Sociology of the Individual in South Asia*<sup>94</sup>

In the field of sociology M. Weber's, L. Dumont's and M. Marriott's theories remain still most pertinent to the question of the role of the individual in the Jaina tradition, since it can only be meaningfully addressed from the comparative perspective which takes account the changing cultural milieus of South Asia and particularly the well-documented intellectual encounters of Vedic, Jaina, and Buddhist thinkers. It is Weber's and Dumont's unparalleled achievement to have conducted detailed studies in comparative sociology. Interestingly enough, both authors pointed to the role of the ascetic, the world-renouncer as an important vehicle for the development of soteriological vision and the development of a doctrines featuring the individual as a value albeit only outside the social group.<sup>95</sup>

92. Cf. two-truth theories, not least in Jaina philosophy, which play a role in such scenarios.

93. See Flügel (2019).

94. For the use of the term individual see note 6.

95. Numerous critics, such as Fuchs (1988), have successfully articulated objections against key aspects of both the 'Weber thesis' and Dumont's work on 'hierarchy' and 'equality'. Particularly the 'non-humanistic' holism of the concept of hierarchy has rightly been singled out for scrutiny, for instance by Parkin (2009). At the same time it is increasingly used in anthropological studies of other regions of the world. See for instance Houseman (2015). Dumont's (1980: xxvii) claim that his theory, which did replace Weber's by incorporating his key insights, 'has yet to be replaced' is still valid. I have argued elsewhere (Flügel 2018c) that Luhmann's (1984) arguments in favour of a replacement of holistic models based on traditional conceptions of 'part-whole relationships' by pluralistic models based on 'system-environment relationships' are valid and worthwhile testing in relevant contexts, as are other communication-theoretical and perspectivist approaches, such as Habermas' (1980-81). The question how such a shift of perspective would impact on Dumont's sociological theory of the individual in India will be discussed in Part Two. On this theory see for instance Tambiah (1981), Carter (1982), Davis (1983), Daniel (1984), Bêteille (1986), Mines (1988, 1994), MacFarlane, Alan (1993), Celtel (2001, 2005), Khare (2006).

The question as to the ways in which the religions of the individual and religions of the group interacted became one of the most significant research programmes in comparative religion. Like Simmel and Weber, Dumont argued that the individual as a value (and its relationship to private property) was theorised for the first time in the context of the religious history of Europe. However, like the schools of Dilthey and Durkheim, Dumont recognised the importance of social structural features and their important influence on cultural semantics, as did Luhmann subsequently.<sup>96</sup> Overall Dumont reconstructed the relationship between semantics of the individual and society from a structuralist perspective. The problem was similar as for Dilthey, who insisted on the significance of the socially irreducible individual will to determine what is unique about an individual, since most components of the personality – language, culture, and physique – are inherited from society:

A strange confusion: there is indeed a person, an individual and unique experience, but it is in large part made up of common elements, and there is nothing destructive in recognizing this: tear from yourself the social material and you are left with nothing more than the potentiality for personal organisation (Dumont 1980: 6).

Dumont (1980: xxxvi) commended McKim Marriott, his long-term intellectual sparring partner, for the ‘genuinely structuralist viewpoint’ that ‘what happens within one actor is by nature not different from what happens between two actors’. In an influential article ‘Hindu transactions: diversity without dualism’ Marriott (1976: 109f.) formulated the hypothesis that:

96. The case in point was the platonic model of a parallelism between the hierarchical structure of society and the structure of the so-called ‘parts of the soul’. Whether Plato ultimately favoured the ontological principle of immortal spiritual freedom inscribed of the soul-body distinction over the perishable socio-psychological attributes of embodied empirical beings is a matter of debate, on which see lately Crotty (2016). For Simmel (1908: 754f.) it was only the ‘contingency’ of Plato’s ‘political tendencies’ and his ‘national Greek view’ that prevented him from bursting the barriers of the ‘Greek form of the state’ by means of his ‘interest in pure individuality’. Luhmann (2005: 298) mentions Aristotle’s remarks on ‘parts of the soul’ but concedes that it is not easy to reconstruct, what he had in mind, because in the normative theological tradition the soul is treated as a single, indivisible element, an encompassing form, whereas here it is treated as sum of parts. His answer is that, today, depictions of part-whole relationships such as this, would need to be regarded as different tiers of description.



[P]ersons – single actors – are not thought in South Asia to be ‘individual’, that is, indivisible, bounded units, as they are in much of Western social and psychological theory as well as in common sense. Instead, it appears that persons are generally thought by South Asians to be ‘dividual’ or ‘divisible’ (Marriott 1976: 111).

Indian thought about transactions differs from much of Western sociological and psychological thought in not presuming the separability of actors from actions. By Indian modes of thought, what goes on *between* actors are the same processes of mixing and separation that go on *within* actors. Actors’ particular natures are thought to be results as well as causes of their particular actions (*karma*). Varied codes of action or codes for conduct (*dharma*)<sup>97</sup> are thought to be [110] naturally embodied in actors and otherwise substantialized in the flow of things that pass among actors. Thus the assumption of the easy, proper separability of action from actor, of code from substance (similar to the assumption of the separability of law from nature, norm from behaviour, mind from body, spirit or energy from matter), that pervades both Western philosophy and Western common sense [...] is generally absent: code and substance (Sanskrit *puruṣa* [sic] and *prakṛiti*, *dharma* and *śarīra* [sic], and so on) cannot have separate existences in this world of constituted things as conceived by most South Asians [...] (Marriott 1976: 109f.).

Marriott argued that from the perspective of South Asians trans-actors, both the agent who transacts and the object that is transacted is thought to be ‘substance-code’ (*śarīra/dharma*).<sup>98</sup> It is this both monistic and particularistic ‘belief in the non-duality of all such pairs’, their interrelatedness, that pervades ‘Hindu [sic] sociology’ (109f.):

All schools of Indian thought tend to agree that substance-codes are found in mixed conditions in this world and that the making of perfect separations, or purifications, is an almost insuperable problem (110).

(a) the particulate and therefore divisible, highly diverse nature of substance-codes, (b) the constant circulation of particles of substance-code, and (c) the inevitable transformation of all natural entities by combinations and separations of their substance-codes (110).

97. Better ‘tendencies’ or ‘dispositions’. Cf. Bourdieu 1983.

98. ‘Whose sources he does not give’, Dumont (1980: xxix) adds, knowing very well that it is Schneider’s (1968: 28) controversial work *American Kinship*, which contrasts ‘emic’ ‘biological’ (substance) and ‘legal’ (code) concepts of kinship in America, which, according to Schneider, who in the second edition distanced himself from his earlier ideas, merge in the idea of ‘blood’ kinship. The general conceptual problems of substantialising thought have already been clearly articulated by Kelsen 1960/1967: 173f. See n. 58 above.

Marriott was trying to theorise *karman* in a contradictory way, Dumont (1980: xxxii) criticised, i.e., both from a monistic and from a transactional perspective. In this model 'the empirical bond between representations and institutions is in large measure abandoned',<sup>99</sup> in contrast to, say, the work of Weber (1916-17), who also considered institutional and ideological factors, arguing that the models of *karman* and caste were functionally complementary in ancient India. First, Marriott used 'Indian' and 'Hindu' as synonyms. Later he switched consistently from 'Indian-' to 'Hindu thinking' and adopted an 'ethno-sociological' approach which Dumont had already dismissed,<sup>100</sup> with regard to the notion of 'Hindu sociology', as a 'contradiction in terms'. Marriott (1989) in the end favoured an interpretation of 'Hindu society' that rested exclusively on his own interpretation of the perspective of Sāṃkhya philosophy, that is, one of the classical schools of Indian philosophy, which was presented as representative of 'Hindu sociology' as a whole. The fact that, philosophically, the relationship between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, pure consciousness and matter, form a strict dualism did not perturb Marriott at first,<sup>101</sup> whose theory in fact only invokes different aspects of *prakṛti* which in Sāṃkhya philosophy encompasses the mind-body complex in ways unfamiliar to modern European thinkers. Mind is regarded as a form of subtle matter subdivided into *buddhi* ('intellect'), *ahaṃkāra* ('I-ness': conception of one's individuality, self-consciousness, ego-tism), *manas* ('mind': perception and cognition), and *prāṇa* ('breath': vitality).

These well-known facts are only recalled here in order to contrast the Jaina teachings with the ideas of the two eminent sociologists whose legacy still looms over Indian Sociology today. Evidently,

99. This is also Spann's (1914/1923) standard criticism of the approaches of Dilthey and Simmel.

100. Mines (1988: 569f.) nonetheless categorises Dumont's work as 'ethnology'.

101. In his response to critics, Marriott 1991: 302 softened his stance: 'primordial *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* are no doubt a dichotomous pair in Sāṃkhya. But I notice that this (in Sāṃkhya) uncontested pair merges without a mediator, and therefore suppose that their previous oppositional relation is conceived as closer – as being more like positive and negative degrees, or the directions up and down, rather than like the remoteness of heaven from earth'. Arguably 'continuous variables' such as the mind-body complex in Sāṃkhya (p. 303) thought of in terms of a subtle-gross matter gradation have been successfully modelled in 'western thought' as well, starting with Aristotle, without muddling the lines. See for instance Hempel & Oppenheim (1936).

Marriott's both 'monistic and transactional' model mirrors Simmel's view of the relation between the fluctuating empirical features of the individual and its relatively stable form. However, the Jaina theory of *karman* is more sophisticated than Marriott's model, and arguably Simmel's as well, because it combines an ideal metaphysical soul-matter dualism with a model of the embodied soul as a living system. It will be argued that because of its dualistic ontology action could ultimately be conceived as detachable from the self in Jaina philosophy, as in Kantian ethics. In fact the Jaina case can be looked at both from the point of view the quantitative 'individualism' paradigm and the qualitative 'dividual' paradigm, because the Jainas were probably the first school in India that, on a metaphysical level, posited a theory of the indivisible singular individual soul as a substance which can rationally control the physical composition / decomposition of the bodies in which it is incarnated in a series of rebirths ideally ending in liberation of the soul from embodiment as such. The components of the body, aggregated by ideally progressively refined karmic particles as fruits and seeds of qualitatively distinct actions, function as a means to the end of the self-realisation of the soul.

The Jaina case was only tangentially discussed by both Marriott and Dumont, so much were they focussed on the majority 'Hindu' society in India that was dominated by the Brahmins. A number of logical fallacies followed from that. Both Marriott and Dumont argued that the 'modern individual', though physically 'indivisible', is conceived of in terms of a dualism of mind and body, and underhand a switch is performed from a mind-body to a soul-body dualism without further reflection.

In contrast to Weber, Dumont considers the individual in India only as a renouncer, but not as a lay-follower of the renouncer, who is incorporating ascetic practices to an extent into everyday life. Like Weber, he only broadly indicated the positive effect of sectarian religion in India on the economic sphere in a hierarchically structured traditional status order.<sup>102</sup>

The Jaina case, by contrast, demonstrates not only how an ethic of personal responsibility and an ethicisation and systematisation of conduct is motivated by Jaina values, outside the context of

102. A positive role for empirical individuality 'in the (South Asian) world' of today is documented by Carter (1982), Davis (1983), Mines (1988, 1994), Khare (2009), and others.

world-renunciation. It also shows that Jaina philosophy posits the integral nature of the individual self as opposed to the composite nature of the individual mind-body complex. It is arguably the only rational theory of karman ever developed which enables participants to rationalise the pervasive but vague popular ideas of the exchange of metaphysical fluids through the notion of karman as a material particle, leading through religious competence to the desubstantialisation of dominant theories of flow or transaction of metaphysical substances as those cited by Marriott to underpin his theory of 'dividuality'<sup>103</sup> and hence a degree of freedom from social constraints.<sup>104</sup>

### *Vedic and Buddhist Conceptions of the Individual*

The specific characteristics of the Jaina conceptions of the individual can only be discovered by studying them comparatively. Of particular importance are the well documented philosophical speculations of and debates between Vedic, Jaina, Ājīvika and Buddhist thinkers about the nature of the human personality during the formative period of classical Jainism in the centuries after the death of Vardhamāna 'Mahāvīra' (c. 599–527 BCE) up to the time of the compilation of the Śvetāmbara canon in the 5th century CE.<sup>105</sup>

Oberlies (1998: 499 n. 192, 504 n. 214) identified four different locations that are perceived to be foundational for personal identity across cultures: (1) the whole body; (2) body parts such as breath, colour, blood, bones, perceived as 'body-souls'; (3) 'body-souls' in combination with a 'free soul';<sup>106</sup> (4) the 'animistic' concept of 'one soul'. It was a mistake of 19th century scholarship, that is, E.B. Tylor, he argued, to project dualistic categories of 'animism' on (first by R.R. Marett so-called) 'pre-animistic' conceptions of personal identity.

103. Cf. Spann's (1923) concept of the 'Gezweiung'.

104. 'If this interpretation is correct, it seems that in orientating themselves towards a 'minimal transactional' Jain ascetic code of conduct, and thereby decoupling themselves from the substantivistic underpinnings of the *brāhmaṇ* social system, Jain laity were enabled to become competitors of the *brāhmaṇ* priests in the social transactional sphere and also to engage legitimately in the maximisation of profit' (Flügel 1995-6: 163f.). Indirectly, corroborating evidence is provided by Laidlaw (1995: 219): 'A vow detaches the identity of an action from the intention with which it is actually performed.'

105. Traditional Śvetāmbara dates.

106. See also Bremmer (1983).

The case in point is the Vedic conception of the person, which the texts depict as a composite of different forces or functions: a life-force (*ásu* or *jivá*) ('free soul'), which can temporarily leave the body, the physical body, made of bones, meat, organs, seeing, liquids, hair, nails, etc., plus a variety of animating and regulating factors or forces ('body souls'): breath (*prāṇá*), breath (*ātmán*), feeling (*manyú*), thinking (*mānas*), seeing 'eye' (*cákṣu*). Oberlies's representation of the complex and diverse materials was influenced by Arbman's (1926–27) analysis of ancient Greek notions of 'multiple souls', which serves as the prototype for type three of Oberlies' four-fold classification. Evidently, the Greek sources tend to characterise the person also as a composite made up of, on the one hand, a so-called 'free soul' which was believed to survive death, the *psuchē* (lit. blow, breath, etc.), and, on the other hand, a variety of 'body souls' which do not: *thumos* (impetus, emotions, etc.), *menos* (blood, impulse, will, etc.), *nous* (reason, intellect, etc.), etc.

Werner (1988: 76f.) pointed out that, in contrast to the soul-body metaphysics that permeates western thought about the individual until today, and some Indian philosophical traditions one may add, ancient Indian (and Greek) characterisations of the human person as a composite of elements and forces which 'temporarily form a structural functioning unit' are from one point of view 'very similar to our modern conception of man'. They, as well, struggle, however, to answer the question 'what makes the universal elements combine into an individual structure?'<sup>107</sup> Werner emphasises that the elemental forces or factors that constitute the Vedic person are described in early Vedic texts as 'gods' (*devatā*) of intrinsic intelligence. After the death of an individual, they were believed to return to their abodes ('mind to the moon, hearing into space, seeing into the sun etc.: *ṚV* 10,16,3' etc.):

Expressed in plain language, the Vedic man experienced himself as a rather complex being. He felt that he was a collection of elemental and dynamic forces which were by their character universal and were endowed with intrinsic intelligence of their own. Although they never lost their universal nature, they nevertheless combined to produce and sustain his individual being (Werner 1988: 76).

107. Werner (1988: 77): 'What we do know is that we are self-regulating or self-regulated structural units possessed of self-consciousness and composed of impersonal constituent elements and forces which make up our bodily organism as well as our mental personality. Why it is so and how it came about remains unknown to us'.

For the purpose of a reconstruction of the evolution of Hindu and Buddhist concepts of the person, Werner himself identified three-tiers of the concept of personality in early Vedic texts:<sup>108</sup> transcendental, subtle, and gross (p. 79). The first tier is associated with the concept of ‘the unborn (*aja*)’, characterised as ‘the creative and supporting force of the universe or of reality as a whole’.<sup>109</sup> It corresponds to the later Upaniṣadic concept of *brahman*. The second is associated with the notion of *tanū* (from *tanū́*, ‘thin, delicate’) which is often translated as ‘body, person, self’. According to Werner it ‘corresponds more to the expression *rūpa* (form, shape)’ and is in most contexts best translated by the word ‘likeness’. Werner interprets *tanū* as a template for the constitution of an individual or person—an ‘empty structure’ which survives death and as such exists for a fraction of time before being ‘immediately filled again by the cosmic elements and forces (*devatā*) which combine anew to make up a reconstituted or reborn personality’:

We may regard the ‘filled’ *tanū* as man’s ‘phenomenal self’ and the empty *tanū* as its base which transmigrates from life to life, not as an unchanging and indestructible substance or soul, but as a structural continuum which registers and preserves within itself in a coded form the imprints of the experiences, volitions and capabilities of the person as they occur or are developed (known in later systems as *saṃskāras* and *vāsanās*) (79).

The third tier is represented by the physiological organism (*śarīra*) ‘made of four elemental forces (earth, water, air and fire—the four *mahābhūtas* in later terminology) which combine to form the bodily organs and are given their structural unity and outward bodily shape and likeness by *tanū*’. Hence the Vedic individual has not identity but is a function of a specific combination of universal dynamic forces and structures:

The structural configuration within the empty *tanū*-structure itself determines the individual pattern and mutual proportion of cosmic elements filling it and that is what gives the specific individual imprint to the universal forces when they form the subtle tier of a person and, as we shall see presently, this makes its mark also on the gross tier (79).<sup>110</sup>

108. Like the classification of Oberlies it is as if it were a mind-body opposition framing the all-important intermediary categories or ‘tiers’.

109. RV 10,16,4; 10,82,6; 1,67,5; 1,164,6; 8,41,10.

110. This is not unlike Dilthey’s characterisation of individuality as a combination of universal components and idiosyncratic features, though Werner (personal



In the early Upaniṣads Werner identified four functional equivalents of the early Vedic concept of *tanū*, the mere form of a person which 'transmigrates' after the death: (1) *saṁjñāna*, 'he who is with consciousness' (BĀU 4.4.2), to be 'filled' again with the qualities of the deceased's knowledge (*vidyā*), fruits of action or 'volitional tendencies' (*karmanī*), and the sum-total of previous experience (*pūrva-prajñā*) forming dispositions for future action via desire (*kāma*), volition (*kratu*) and action (*karma*) (BĀU 4.4.5). (2) A 'mark' (*liṅga*) or subtle body which survives the decomposition of the gross body (BĀU 4.4.6) and seems somewhat connected to the concept of the mind (*manas*). (3) The eternal 'name' (*nāma*) or the core of individual character is understood to be composed by universal elements that are shaped into individual configurations (BĀU 3.2.12), and the individual embodied personality (*nāma-rūpa*) (CU 6.3.2).<sup>111</sup> (4) The individual 'living self' (*jīvātman*), which initially may have been conceived as a universal force (CU 6.3.2-3) not unlike the interpretation of *jīva* (life, individual living being) as a transmigrating essence in Jainism.

In contrast to the later now stereotyped Buddhist non-self theories, in the early Buddhist texts three elements are said to survive death and to be foundational for reincarnation: (1) personality (*nāma*) and mental body (*nāma-kāya*)—not to be mixed up with the visible body (*rūpa-kāya*)—endowed with personal controlling factor of cognizables derived from perceptions (*manas*), aggregate of empirical consciousness (underlying personality) (*viññāna* <*vijñāna*>)<sup>112</sup> and the heart (changing sum total of individual characteristics) (*citta*) which, according to Werner, resembles Vedic *tanū* and Upaniṣadic *saṁjñāna*. (2) The reincarnating spirit being (*gandhabba* <*gandharva*>) in between existences (*antarābhavasattva*). (3) The liberated one (*tathāgata*, lit. 'thus gone/arrived', the *uttama puruṣa*). In later Buddhist texts, such as *Mahānidāna Sutta*, by contrast, there is no substance transmigrating from one existence to the next (Werner 1988: 87ff.):

communication) was not influenced by it. Simmel (1957/1971: 224) echoes Dilthey (it is interesting to compare his statements with Jaina concepts of the individual living being): 'Certainly, each individual is a synthesis of the forces that constitute the universe. Yet out of this material that is common to all, each one creates an entirely unique configuration. It is the realization of this incomparability, the filling of a space held in reserve for him alone, that is the moral duty of the individual. Each person is called to realize his own, his very own prototype'.

111. Cf. *Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad* (BĀU) 4.4.2 & 4.4.5.

112. Words in <brackets> indicate one or more Sanskrit gloss for an original Prakrit term.

Every living being, since it is a process, is [now] described as a flux, a flowing, a stretching forth, a continuity (*santāna*), or, more frequently, as a combustion, a flame. There is no ‘substance’, no ‘self’ or ‘soul’, underlying the process, unifying it. What we call the ‘I’ or the ‘personality’ or the individual, whatever appears to be unitary, is in reality not an entity but a function’ (Malalasekera 1968: 66f.).

The historical changing meanings of the terms *nāmarūpa* (‘name and form’: living body, later: personality) and *viññāṇa* (consciousness as carrier of life), in particular, in the early Buddhist context, have been re-traced by Langer (2001)<sup>113</sup> and Olalde (2014). Following Frauwallner, Schmithausen, C.A.F. Rhys Davids (and Werner),<sup>114</sup> Olalde showed how in the later Buddhist Abhidharma literature the surviving ‘personalistic’ elements of early Buddhism were eliminated and replaced by the remarkably incoherent doctrine of the twelve-fold dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) which replaced the idea of a transmigrating structural core of the person with a theory of the five constituent elements of being, or *khandhas* <*skandha*>: *rūpa* ‘bodily form’, *vedanā* ‘sensation’, *saññā* <*sañjñā*> ‘perception’, *saṃkhara* <*saṃskāra*> ‘aggregate of formations’, *viññāṇa* <*vijñāna*> ‘consciousness or thought-faculty’:

Since the narrow meaning of *nāma* still allowed its identification with the core or the essence of a person, it was finally reinterpreted and split into different constituents, first into *vedanā*, *saññā*, *cetanā* ‘volition’, *phassa* and *manasikāra* ‘attention’, and subsequently into the five *khandhas*: *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṃkhāras* and *viññāṇa*. Thus, this reinterpretation of *viññāṇa* as a transmigrating entity was eventually replaced by the sixfold perception’ (Olalde 2014: 156).<sup>115</sup>

113. Frauwallner (1953, I: 206) had already pointed out that in time *rūpa* became a designation for physicality and *nāma* a designation of psychic factors which, apart from perception, constitute the worldly personality: ‘Daraus ergibt sich nun eine Umschreibung der Person mit den Begriffen *nāman*, *rūpa* und *viññāṇa*, welche dann im Laufe der Zeit mit dem Konzept der fünf *khandas* in einer Weise in Einklang gebracht wurde, daß *nāman* die drei übrigen *khandas* (*vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṃkhāra*) – oder sogar auch *viññāṇa* – einbegreifend verstanden wurde’ (Langer 2001: 26f.).

114. See also Hamilton 1996 and others.

115. See also Malalasekera 1968: 66f. ‘In this analysis, the human being was found to consist of two parts, *rūpa* and *nāma*, loosely translated as corporeality (matter) and mind, *rūpa* representing the physical elements and *nāma* the mental ones. Matter is composed of four ‘elementary qualities of extension, cohesion, calorificity (temperature), and vibration. The mental elements are similarly divided into four groups: feelings, sensations, or ‘receptions’ (*vedanās*); ‘perceptions’ or ideas (*saññās*); ‘mental activities’, ‘complexes’, ‘confections’, consciousnesses (*viññāṇas*). Matter (*rūpa*) and these four divisions of mind (*nāma*) are never found singly but only in conglomerations

Like Werner (1988: 87), both Langer (2001) and Olalde (2014: 52) highlight the uneven and ‘highly polysemous’ nature of the sources and of key terms such as *nāmarūpa* (which in Buddhist texts can refer both to a ‘designation’ of an object or a ‘proper name’ of an individual or an identity (p. 156), which do not lend themselves easily to consistent interpretations (p. 154).<sup>116</sup> Significant for the exploration of the links between the Vedic, Buddhist and Jaina traditions is Olalde observation that in some passages of the Vedic corpus, such as BĀU 1.6.1 and 1.5.21, *nāman* is connected not with *rūpa* but with *karman*, or action (function), with whom *nāma* and *rūpa* occasionally form a triad in Vedic texts: *nama*, *rūpa*, and *karma* (p. 36).<sup>117</sup>

The twofold conclusion of Werner (1988) as well as Oberlies (1998), that the stereotypical ‘animist’ dualism of the textbooks can neither be found in Vedic nor in Buddhist conceptions of the individual person, and that conceptions of transmigrating structures of personality can be found in both Vedic and early Buddhist texts, is stating the obvious and widely shared:

The likely reason for the fact that the Vedic and Buddhist conceptions of the composite person appear to be similar have been outlined by Schrader (1902: 5f.), who pointed out that the Buddha’s rejection of the idea of the soul as a thing-like substance held by contemporary philosophers, foremost amongst them the Jaina, cannot be maintained, because everything in this world is in flux, had led him to the conclusion, not unlike European philosophers much later, that the ‘soul’ (*attā*) is nothing but a composite of material processes. What remains as the core of the individual living being is merely the ‘thirst for life’ (*taṇhā*):

Since the *ātman* of the Upaniṣads is not the individual transmigrating kernel of the human personality, its inclusion in or omission from the theory of personality does not make any difference whatsoever to

tions or aggregates (*khandhas*). The five aggregates together constitute what is called the ‘I’ or ‘personality’ or the ‘individual’. The aggregates are not parts or pieces of the individual but phases or forms of development, something like the shape, color, and smell of a flower. Even the sense-organs and the organs of the body are likewise really forms of development or manifestations, since they all originate from one common source. There is no ‘stuff’ or substratum as such but only manifestations, energies, activities, processes. In Buddhist thought, to speak of matter as apart from energy would be like speaking of one side of a sheet of paper imagined by itself’.

116. Werner’s theory has not been taken up, not even by Langer and Olalde. It is therefore worthwhile reconsidering.

117. ‘Wurde im RV der Name mit einem Teilaspekt oder Charakterzug gleichgesetzt, so tritt er nun als partikuläre Funktion auf’ (Olalde 2015: 36).

the notion of personal identity and continuity from life to life. Neither Hinduism, nor Buddhism posits an abiding, unchanging, purely individual soul inhabiting the personality structure and therefore the Upaniṣadic assertion of the ātman and the Buddhist arguable negation of attā do not justify or substantiate the view, still perpetuated in some quarters, that Hinduism believes in a transmigrating soul while Buddhism denies it (Werner 1988: 95).

Part 2 of this article will appear in a later issue of *Max Weber Studies*.

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 CU *Chāṇdogya Upaniṣad*. See Olivelle 2008: 95-176.  
 RV *Der Rg-Veda*. Aus dem Sanskrit ins Deutsche Übersetzt und mit einem laufenden Kommentar versehen von Karl Friedrich Geldner. Harvard Oriental Series 63. Cambridge/Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003 (1951).  
 Viy *Viyāhapannatti (Bhagavāi) (Vyākhyāprajñapti / Bhagavatī)*. See Deleu 1970.

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